THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

W. C. CLARK

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The Christian faith

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

A HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN TEACHING

BY

W. C. CLARK, D.D.

"Help me to tell what I believe."

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TO

THE PEOPLE WHOM I HAVE SERVED

IN THE PASTORATES OF
PASS CHRISTIAN, MISSISSIPPI
GREENSBORO AND NEWBERNE, ALABAMA
SHELBYVILLE, TENNESSEE
AUGUSTA AND SHARON, KENTUCKY
LIVINGSTON AND BOLIGEE, ALABAMA
WOODLAWN, ALABAMA
AND TO

MY DEVOTED WIFE

WHO HAS SHARED WITH ME
THE SACRIFICES AND THE
REWARDS OF THIS SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

It is a pleasure and a compliment to introduce this book to the public.

The themes are the most momentous over which a human being ever held awful and anxious debate with himself.

The author, by nature, by culture, by experience, by sympathy, is splendidly competent to handle them, and has handled them in a competent and satisfying way.

His aim is popular theology, an answer to the appeal of the earnest Christian, "Help me to tell what I believe." He does it; he does it thoroughly. He sweeps the whole *gamut* of the Christian faith — in language that is simple, in terms that are everyday.

It starts no questions, it airs no doubts, it parades no speculations; it takes the reader into the sanctuary of Holy Scripture, and holds his ear to the mouth of God as he speaks in his Word.

It has been a long time since anything so sound and loyal has come from the press. As old as the Gospel, these views are about to have the interest — and *preciousness* — of antiques.

When David was besieged in the cave of Adul-

lam, and his native Bethlehem was in the hands of the Philistines, he cried out, "O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" Three of his mighty men brought him water from the well of his father, from the well of his childhood,— but he poured it out as a libation unto the Lord.

Beset by Philistine critics and speculators and reconstructionists, here is drink from the well of our fathers — the faith of our childhood — so cool, so refreshing, so delicious, so biblical!

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PREFACE

"*Help me to tell what I believe,*" was the earnest appeal of an intelligent young Christian to a pastor. It is believed that there are many others of this class, who would like to read a clear-cut statement of the Christian faith.

There are not a few thoughtful men who would really like to know what Christians of the evangelical branches of the Church hold and teach.

There are others who are prejudiced against Christianity because they have been misinformed as to its teachings. These misconceptions might be removed by the reading of such a volume.

There are "seekers after the truth" in foreign lands, who would welcome a clear statement of the truth held and taught by those who would lead them to embrace Christianity.

There are Christian teachers and workers who need a brief outline of the evidences and doctrines of Christianity for use in instructing others in the knowledge of the truth.

There are many excellent works on Theology, but they are too large, too expensive and too technical. There is a felt need for a work that covers the ground and yet is of moderate size and cost,

and written in a style easily understood by those not familiar with the terms used in the more learned treatises on such subjects. The attempt has been made to prepare such a volume in the hope that it may be used by the Great Head of the Church, both at home and abroad, for the glory of His name, for the salvation of souls and for the comfort and confirmation of the children of God in their faith. It is a book by a pastor for the people.

Material has been prepared for a companion volume on "The Church: Its Government, Worship, Sacraments and Work," which may be issued later should this prove acceptable to the reading public.

W. C. Clark.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	Our Hope	1
II	The Bible from God	11
III	The Books We Have are the Bible, and They Only are the Bible .	28
IV	The Bible the Rule of Faith and Practice	46
V	God, His Existence and Attributes	57
VI	Creation	72
VII	Angels	83
VIII	Providence	94
IX	Sin	106
X	The Law	118
XI	God's Plan of Rescue	130
XII	The Person of Christ — His Humanity and Divinity	138
XIII	The Atonement	149
XIV	Salvation Applied	163
XV	The Change of Heart	172
XVI	Evidences of a Change of Heart	184
XVII	Repentance	193
XVIII	Faith	203
XIX	What is a Christian?	215

CHAPTER		PAGE
XX	The Method of Justification	225
XXI	Membership in the Family of God	234
XXII	Sanctification	245
XXIII	Good Works	258
XXIV	Assurance	268
XXV	Perseverance	277
XXVI	Death	286
XXVII	The Resurrection	299
XXVIII	The General Judgment	309
XXIX	Heaven	322
XXX	Hell	332

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

CHAPTER I

OUR HOPE

The age in which we live is one in which the most sacred beliefs are called in question. It is an age, too, in which there are many earnest searchers after the truth. It is important, therefore, on the one hand, to be able to answer the objections of such as seek to overthrow our faith, and, on the other hand, to be prepared to guide and instruct such as are really seeking the truth. We must be "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason for the hope that is in us."

It will prove of great service to the believer to keep constantly in mind that Christianity is based upon *facts* that are capable of being made evident to the mind open to the reception of the truth. The existence of God, the birth of Christ, His death and resurrection, are specimens of the great facts upon which our holy religion rests. The evidences of these facts are sufficient to satisfy every reasonable demand. The work of grace in the heart is no less a fact than the provision of salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ, hence every Christian should be able, not only to give an outline of the evidences of Chris-

tianity, but also the evidences of his own conversion; not only to show that Christianity is from God, but that he has accepted Christ as his only hope of salvation.

It is also a fact that God has made a revelation of His will to sinners, teaching them "what they are to believe concerning Him and what duty He requires of them." This revelation is clear, full and sufficient. Nothing needs to be added to it and nothing should be subtracted from it. The Christian should know and be able to state the evidences upon which this revelation is received as from God. He should be acquainted with the contents of this revelation, for here are to be found all of the doctrines he is to believe, the worship he should practice and the form of government under which he should live in the Church. He should seek this knowledge and be ready to give a reason for the faith and hope in his own mind and heart. He should be able to state all of the essential teachings of Christianity and to give to friend and foe the grounds upon which he accepts Christianity and its teachings. He should be glad to tell others of the blessed hope set before him in the gospel and received into his own soul. It is true that one may be a Christian without being able to give a clear and connected statement of the Christian faith. He may be a child of God without being able to make plain to others how and when he became such. He may be like the little Scotch girl who, when being exam-

ined by her pastor for admission to the Lord's table, could not state her views quite clearly — so that the elders were about to delay her admission till better instructed. But as she was turning to go from their presence she said, with tears in her eyes, "I canna' talk much for Jesus, but I love Him well enough to die for Him," and so gained a place at His table. There may be many others among the followers of Christ who are not able to make a clear and satisfactory statement of their faith. Still it is the duty and privilege of every Christian to be able to give some reason for the hope that is in him. While it may not be essential to his salvation to be able to give a clear outline of all of these subjects, it is essential to his comfort, protection and usefulness in the Christian life. For your own satisfaction you should possess this knowledge and be able to communicate it to others. You ought to be able to tell others "how this hope arose, what it contains and on what it is based." As a *matter of intelligence* a man should know why he is a Christian; why he believes the Bible to be a revelation from God and why he believes he has accepted Christ as his Savior; why he believes in a certain system of doctrine, of government and worship. What would be thought of a citizen who could give no intelligent account of the teaching of the constitution of his country nor of the reasons why he loved his country? What would be thought of a member of a political party who could not give

an outline of his party's platform nor the reasons why he preferred the principles of that party to those held by the opposite party? What should be thought of the Christian who can give no account of the constitution of the great Christian commonwealth of which he is a member nor of the reasons for his devotion to the spiritual government to which he claims allegiance? What should be thought of the member of a particular church who cannot tell a stranger what doctrines it holds, what form of government it exercises and what form of worship it observes? You would undoubtedly expect the citizen to know something of the constitution of his country, the politician to be informed as to the principles of his party, and the Christian as to the teachings of Christ and the member of a given branch of the Church to know what interpretation his church puts upon the leading teachings of God's Word. As a matter of information, then, every Christian should post himself on such important subjects. He should be able to give an outline of the evidences of Christianity, an outline of the plan of salvation, the evidences of a change of heart, and to state clearly the doctrines, the government and the worship of the church of which he is a member.

As a means of comfort and strength one needs to be well established in the faith. The apostle James compares the double minded man to "a wave of the sea driven of the wind and tossed," and declares him to be "unstable in all of his

ways." Such a man can neither be strong nor comfortable in his religious life any more than the vacillating man in any other department of life. How can he have peace and comfort concerning his hope unless he have confidence that it rests upon the Rock of Ages? How can he be strong to resist the influence of error unless he be well grounded in the faith? How can he be strong to ward off the assaults of Satan unless he know how to wield the sword of the Spirit? How can he be strong to do the work of the Christian unless he be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might? As you would have comfort and strength in your Christian life, study the Word of God that you may "grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Still further, you should be able to give a reason for the hope that is in you *to correct the many misrepresentations that are made concerning the Bible, concerning Christianity and concerning that form of Christianity which you hold to be that which is taught in the Word of God.* As in the days of the Apostles, so now, this way is "everywhere spoken against." The Bible is misrepresented as teaching doctrines to which God hath never given His approval. An intelligent lawyer once raised the objection to the Bible that it taught that God would punish all men equally. When asked to cite the passage he could not, of course, do so, for it is written "God shall render unto every man according to his deeds."

Christianity is misrepresented as lending encouragement to sin by teaching that no man who trusts in Christ shall ever be condemned, whereas Paul, who so clearly set forth the doctrine of justification by faith, rejects this conclusion with abhorrence and shows that the love of Christ, the strongest motive, constraineth the believer not to live unto himself but unto Christ who died for him.

Each denomination of Christians has been misrepresented. There are many persons who will not take the trouble to examine the " standards of faith " of other churches, but form their opinions from some partial or prejudiced statement as to what such churches hold, and then repeat these statements as true. For example, the Baptist church has been accused of teaching that " baptism saves "; the Methodist church of being " like the Catholic "; the Presbyterian church of denying the " free agency of man "; and the Episcopal church of holding to " baptismal regeneration." Even so great and good a man as John Wesley is reported to have said in one of his sermons that " Calvinism was worthy of the Devil for its author." To this Dr. Dabney replied, " If Calvinism were what Wesley represented it to be, it would be worthy of the Devil for its author; but being what it is, it is the very embodiment of God's truth drawn from His own Word." A distinguished judge once said to a minister,

" I like your church, but I do not see how it can hold that horrible doctrine of ' total depravity.' "

"What do you understand by total depravity, Judge?"

"Why, that every man is as bad as he can be."

"Neither do I believe that," said the minister; "but that is not what we mean by total depravity. We mean that every man is 'wholly defiled, in *all the faculties* and parts of soul and body,' that his mind is darkened by sin, his heart hardened, his will perverted and the image of God lost — that 'the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked'— that men are 'dead in trespasses and sins.' The love of God no longer dwells in the heart of man, but enmity is there. In *all of his soul* he has gone away from God and fallen into such a state of sin that nothing but the power of God can restore to his soul the lost likeness of God."

"I believe that," said the judge.

"Then we are at one on that point," replied the minister.

To whatever Christian church you belong, you should give such study and attention to the Word of God, to the teachings of Christianity and to the interpretation of the system given by your own church, that you may be able to correct such misrepresentations. You should have clear and distinct views of the truth yourself, that you may be able to discover and correct any errors and misrepresentations made by others. Unless you have such knowledge, you are not only at the mercy of those by whom your faith is assailed, but you are

not able to make a proper defense of the Bible, nor of Christianity, nor of your own faith, as received from those who have handed it down to you.

For the benefit of others you should know the grounds on which the Christian faith is received, the evidences on which you depend for your interest in that hope, and the doctrines, the government and worship taught in the Bible.

Since Christ's ascension it is largely through His people that He reveals to men the way of life. It is true that this book is the only infallible rule of faith and practice and that *herein* the way of life is clearly revealed. But men are slow to study and slower to receive the teaching of this Word. Hence God hath ordained that His truth shall be brought into contact with other minds and hearts through the word and testimony of those who have already felt its power and known its preciousness. "Ye are my witnesses." "Ye are living epistles known and read of all men." "Ye are the light of the world." That is, you may be the means of instructing, guiding and enlightening others by your word and example. If you know the plan of salvation you can tell others. If you know the teaching of Christ you can instruct others. If you can give a reason for the hope that is in you, you may be the means of leading others to indulge such a hope. If you neglect to secure such knowledge you may become guilty of your brother's blood. A young man was fatally injured in a great manufacturing plant. He knew he must

soon pass into eternity and called upon his companions to tell him the way of life and pray for him. Not one felt competent to instruct him. He went to the bar of God untaught by some who claimed to be the children of God. You ought to learn to tell men how to be saved. "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins."

As a means of promoting Christian unity you should study the teaching of God's Word as to what doctrines should be held. Heretofore the people of God have spent much time in discussing the points upon which they differ. It is time they were considering the truths upon which they agree. You would be surprised to find upon how many doctrines we are at one. We all take the Word of God to be the source of our belief. We all believe in the Trinity. We all believe in the divinity of Christ. We all receive the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. We all repeat the Apostles' Creed together. We all admit the fall of man and believe in the redemption purchased by Christ. We all claim the same Father, trust the same Savior and hope to be made holy through the same Holy Spirit. We belong to the same army, follow the same Captain, contend against the same enemies, love the same cause and seek the same heaven. The more you study the Bible and the better you know and love Christ, the more will you

discover and rejoice in the unity of the Church of God which gathers into its fold all who love and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

Then for the glory of God and for the honor of religion you should be ready to defend His truth, testify to His grace and teach the doctrines, worship and government of His Church. The teaching of His Word, the testifying to the power of His grace and the shining of His grace in your hearts and lives will be the means of declaring His glory and of extending His kingdom.

CHAPTER II

THE BIBLE FROM GOD

The Bible is the source from which the Christian derives the light that guides his feet, the water that refreshes his spirit, and the food that nourishes his soul on his pilgrimage from earth to heaven. It is the chart by which alone he can guide his frail bark over the rough sea of life and anchor safely in the haven of heaven. Without such a chart he must inevitably make shipwreck on the rocks and reefs along the shore of time. With the Bible and with the Savior whom it reveals he has life and salvation. Without these he is without God and without hope in the world. No wonder, therefore, that the Christian clings to the Bible with all of the tenacity with which the shipwrecked mariner clings to his life boat.

For his own information, for the instruction of others, for the best interests of the Church and for the glory of God, every man ought to know and be able to state the reasons upon which he accepts this book as a revelation from God.

It is with the hope of helping you in your efforts to secure such knowledge that a brief outline of these evidences is now given. Having shown you

the importance of being able "to give an answer to him that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you," some of the grounds upon which the Bible is believed to be the inspired revelation of the divine will are now furnished.

The fact that many of the greatest and best men in many lands and for long ages have accepted this book as from God, through men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, may be taken as a presumptive evidence of its divine origin. It was received as inspired, read publicly in the churches in the age immediately succeeding its delivery and has been so received from that day to this. There must have been something about the book and the evidences in its favor which impressed their minds and hearts with its supernatural character. The fact that the Church universal, in all of its branches and divisions, accepts this book as a divine revelation shows that it is regarded as entitled to a place in the hearts of men given to no merely human production. This fact at least shows that according to the verdict of the Church universal this is God's Word, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

Among the more positive grounds of belief that this is the Word of God is the fact that miracles have been wrought in attestation of the claims to inspiration on the part of those who wrote it. A miracle is an act wrought by the power of God, in the presence of witnesses, to establish the claims of those who profess to reveal His will. It is

something beyond the power of man or angels to do. It is something which can be wrought only by the power of God, and which, when wrought in order to attest the claims of one speaking for God, puts it beyond all reasonable doubt that such persons are what they claim — teachers sent from God. For example, when Moses was sent to lead the children of Israel out of the land of bondage, he expressed a fear that the people would not believe that God had sent him. It was then that God gave him permission to use His name and to work miracles that the people might be led to believe that he was sent of God and that he spake in His name and wrought by His power. You remember how his rod was turned into a snake, his hand made leprous and the water which he took from the river and poured upon the dry land was turned into blood according to the promise of God. "If they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken to thine voice, that thou shalt take the water of the river and pour it upon the dry land, and the water which thou takest out of the river, shall become blood upon the dry land." When Moses pled that he was not eloquent, but that he was slow of speech, God bade him go and promised to "be with his mouth and teach him what he should say." God was to guide him in what he should say and then confirm his claim to be speaking for God by the miracles which should be wrought. Then you are familiar with that wonderful series of mira-

cles by which Pharaoh and his people and the children of Israel were at last all convinced that God was speaking through Moses. You recall the ten plagues culminating in the death of the first born in every home where the blood was not found upon the lintel and the door post. You remember the passage through the Red Sea on dry ground, the manna from heaven, the water from the flinty rock that followed them in the way.

These miracles must have been wrought or the children of Israel would never have left the land of bondage. Their enemies would not have permitted it and they would not have undertaken it. Dr. Scott has well said,

"The narratives of these miracles may be clearly shown to have been published very soon after the time and at the places at which they are said to have been wrought in the most conspicuous manner and before a very great multitude of enemies as well as friends. They constituted a public challenge to every man to contradict or disprove them, if he could, yet this public challenge never called forth a single individual to deny that they were really performed. Surely Moses could never have persuaded the whole nation that they had witnessed the plagues of Egypt, that their first born had been spared, their enemies destroyed, that they had passed through the sea dry shod and had been fed forty years in the wilderness had none

of these events ever taken place. And if that generation could not have been thus imposed upon, then surely the next generation could not have been persuaded that their fathers had seen and experienced such wonderful things, when they had never before heard a word about them."

The truth is it requires greater credulity to believe that the exodus could have been effected without these miracles than with them. The Passover is still observed among the Jews and is a living monument to the belief of that people that God did spare their first born on the night on which the destroying angel slew the first born in every family that had not, by faith, sprinkled the blood upon the lintel and the door post.

The miracles of the New Testament are no less striking nor any less authentic. The healing of the leper, the restoration of sight to the man born blind, the raising of Lazarus and the resurrection of Jesus Christ are all vouched for by witnesses whose testimony would be received in any of the courts of our land. So strong is the testimony in favor of the resurrection of Christ that Randolph Tucker, a distinguished teacher of law at Washington and Lee University, said that he had never won a lawsuit with one tenth of the evidence that was to be found in favor of the resurrection of Christ. It has been well asked, " When could the belief in the resurrection of Christ and in the miracles wrought by Him and His apostles have been obtruded on mankind if they had never hap-

pened?" Surely not in the age in which they were witnessed by hundreds and thousands who were publicly challenged to deny them. If not then, when could they have been begun to be believed? It is far easier to admit the miracles as the origin and explanation of Christianity than to account for it in any other way. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper and the observance of the first day of the week are two living monumental evidences pointing back to the death and resurrection of Christ. If such events had never taken place men could never have been persuaded to keep these ordinances in commemoration of them any more than the Jews could have been led to keep the Passover in memory of God's mercy in sparing their first born had He never shown them that kindness; or than that we as a people could have been induced to celebrate the birthday of George Washington had no such man ever been born. Deny the miracles of the Bible and you must refuse to believe in human testimony and cease to accept the plainest statements of history. If, then, those who spoke and wrote the words of this book claimed to be inspired and God wrought miracles by them in attestation of their claims, then they must have been from God and must have spoken the words He put into their mouths and penned the thoughts He breathed into their minds. We know they were teachers sent of God for no man could do the miracles which they did except God were with him.

Another strong proof of the inspiration of the

Bible may be drawn from the prophecies it contains.

A prophet is, literally, one who speaks for God. But since God knows the future as well as the past and since His kingdom has always had to do with the future quite as much as with the past, we find in the words of those who have spoken for God many predictions of events which no human sagacity could have foreseen. Only God can know the future. Hence if there be found in this revelation predictions concerning future events, made hundreds of years prior to the events, which afterward came to pass in exact accordance with the prediction, then we may fairly conclude that it was God who foresaw and foretold such events through the instrumentality of men whom He had inspired to reveal His will. If we can find one such prophecy made and fulfilled we can conclude that God revealed Himself through such prophet, and if through one then through all of those who foretold such events. The number and variety of such prophecies is so great that it will be impossible to present them all. You will find them discussed in such books as Newton and Keith on "Prophecy" and Alexander on the "Evidences of Christianity," to which we are largely indebted for the facts which are now to be presented.

Recall the prophecies concerning the Jewish people. God threatened to bring against them "a nation from afar, as swift as the eagle flyeth, a nation whose tongue they should not understand."

This was fulfilled when the Chaldeans and afterwards when the Romans came against them. The Romans were from afar, the rapidity of their conquests resembled the eagle's flight in pursuit of its prey, the standard of their army was an eagle and their language was unknown to the Jews. Their cities were to be taken and their walls to be thrown down. This was fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, burned the temple and took down the walls of the city. (II Kings 25:10.) Famine was to accompany and follow such invasions. This was fulfilled in more instances than one. It was fulfilled in the siege of Samaria by the king of Syria when two women agreed to give up their children to be eaten. (II Kings 6:28, 29.) It was fulfilled when the Chaldeans came against Jerusalem and it was fulfilled when the Romans besieged the same city, on which occasion Josephus informs us that a noble woman killed and ate a part of her own child and hid the remainder for future meals.

Great numbers of the Jews were to be slain and the remnant scattered among all nations. It is estimated that in the siege of Jerusalem by Titus 110,000 persons perished by fire and famine and sword. We know that the ten tribes were carried away from their own land by the king of Assyria, that the two tribes were afterwards taken to Babylon and that subsequently the Romans took away their place and nation and that from

that day to this they have been scattered among all nations and in almost all lands.

They were, nevertheless, to be kept separate and distinct from all people and so it has come to pass. Everywhere you go you find Jews and everywhere you find them they are separate and distinct, notwithstanding all of the persecution to which they have been exposed and by which they have been sorely tempted to merge their identity by intermarrying with people of other races. If you could pour a pitcher of clear spring water into one of our interior water courses and follow its course down the river to the Gulf and across the Atlantic, and see that while it moved among all waters it mingled with none but preserved its identity, it would not be so wonderful as the fact that the Jewish people, dispersed from Judea, have been scattered among all nations and yet have mingled with none, but have been kept separate and distinct so that you can still recognize them as members of the race of God's chosen people. No wonder, when it was asked that a short argument for inspiration be given the answer came back, "The Jew." He is a living fulfillment of prophecy and a most striking evidence that "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

There are some striking predictions concerning great cities mentioned in the Bible. Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, was to be utterly destroyed

" by flood and fire." It was distinctly foretold that " the Lord will make an utter end of the place thereof." Lucian, who was born on the banks of the river Euphrates, testifies that there was, in his day, no vestige of it left and that no one could tell where it was once situated. A later traveler declares that no brick nor stone nor other building material was visible there. It has only been by the aid of pick and shovel that even the site of the once great and beautiful city has been discovered, and the remains found beneath the ground only make stronger the proof that the city was destroyed according to the word of the Lord.

The destruction of Babylon was an exact fulfillment of the prophecies against it. God called Cyrus by name two hundred years before he was born and afterwards put it into his heart to go up against the city to take and destroy it. You recall the circumstances of its capture. While the king, his captains and lords were engaged in revelry, Cyrus turned the course of the river into a lake and gained entrance by the river bed and captured and destroyed the city, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, Chapter 51. " I will dry up thy rivers; a snare was laid for Babylon. It was taken and it was not aware." Its destruction was to be complete. " No man was to dwell there," neither would " the Arabian pitch his tent there, neither should the shepherds make their folds there." " Wild beasts of the desert were to dwell there, doleful creatures and owls." A re-

cent traveler writes, "Our path lay through a great mass of ruined heaps on the site of shrunken Babylon. I am perfectly incapable of conveying an adequate idea of the dreary, lonely nakedness that appeared before us." (Porter.) "Silence profound as the grave reigns throughout the ruins. It is impossible to behold the scene and not be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled." (Keppel.) "Nothing would induce the Arabs to pitch their tents and remain all night near the principal mound, as they have a superstitious belief that evil spirits dwell there." (Mignan.) We are told that the place is full of doleful creatures and stagnant pools, and that there are there dens of wild beasts and that owls, hyenas, jackals and lions make their habitations there, fulfilling in minute detail the word of prophecy.

The predictions concerning the fall of Jerusalem were equally minute and just as literally fulfilled. See Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 17. These prophecies were made by Christ and are an evidence at once of the inspiration of the Bible and of the divinity of Him who made them. They include a great number and variety of prophecies concerning the holy city, all of which have been fulfilled. Its temple was to be destroyed, its walls thrown down and its inhabitants to suffer such tribulation as was not from the beginning of the world. History shows that under Titus the temple was burned, the walls thrown down and the

very foundations of the temple were dug up in the search for treasure and the place leveled and plowed over as a field. The slain were more than 100,000 and the captives nearly as many. Josephus tells us that "the calamity of the people, from the creation of the world, if they be compared with the sufferings of the Jews, will be found to be far surpassed by them." Titus himself acknowledged that it was due to the anger of God that the people had been overcome. It was God who drew out the Jews from their fortifications; for what could the hands or engines of men do against such towers as these? He refused to be crowned in honor of the victory, declaring that he was not the author of this achievement but that the anger of God against the Jews was what put the victory in his hands.

The prophecies concerning Christ Himself are wonderful in their minuteness and fulfillment. The tribe, the house, the family, the time, the place and the manner of His birth are all indicated and were all fulfilled. His place of residence, His forerunner, His life, His character, His miracles, His words, His sufferings, His being pierced, His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, the casting of lots for His garment, the offering of vinegar, the escape from having His bones broken, His death with the wicked and His burial with the rich — these and many other details were foretold and came to pass according to the letter. No one can collate all of the passages which relate to the com-

ing Messiah, remember that they were all spoken hundreds of years before the events took place and that they were sealed up in the Hebrew language which became a dead language and was translated into the Greek 280 years before Christ, and read the testimony of the four evangelists as to their fulfillment without feeling the force of the argument from prophecy. The contrast between all predictions of mere men and those spoken by God through men are marked. One of the wisest men in our Southland said that if our recent war between the states should result as it did the city of New Orleans, instead of being a great commercial city, would be deserted and its wharves would become a place for the fishermen to spread their nets. So far from turning out that way, more cotton and grain have been marketed in that city and more commerce has been done there since the war than before. Thus we can draw the contrast between God's certain and man's uncertain knowledge concerning the future. Miracles are an evidence of divine power and prophecies of divine knowledge. The two combined go to show that only the All-powerful and the All-wise could have enabled men to do the works and speak and write the words ascribed to the authors of the books of the Bible.

The book itself proclaims its divine origin. When we remember that it is made up of sixty-six books, composed by about forty authors, extending from Moses to John, a period of fifteen

hundred years, and that throughout the entire volume there is manifest a unity of purpose, a harmony of teaching and statement, an elevation of moral and spiritual teaching superior to all other systems, we must look higher than the wisdom of man for its origin. When we find here so accurately described the sins and wants of man and see presented a plan of salvation so well suited to meet and relieve all of these wants and pardon and cleanse away all of these sins, we can scarcely resist the conclusion that this book is from God. Every effect must have an adequate cause. The Bible is an effect, bearing the impress of infinite wisdom, holiness, goodness and truth. It must, therefore, have come from God. Good men could not and bad men would not have written it unaided and hence the conclusion that it must be from God, as claimed by those who were the instruments through whom God gave it. If this can be said of the book, what must be said of Him whom the book reveals? How shall we account for the person and character of Jesus Christ? His historic existence is now generally admitted. Better deny the existence of Cæsar or Napoleon than to question the fact of Christ's birth and life. Now how can you account for His wonderful character except that "He was in the beginning with God" and that "*He was God*"? His character is portrayed by the four evangelists. They tell us of His power and wisdom and goodness. They relate what He said, what He did

and what impression He made upon the minds and hearts of the men of His day. They tell us how they were astonished at His teaching, how they marvelled at His miracles, how they said, "He hath done all things well," "He spake as never man spake." "He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." They wrote from four different standpoints and yet they agree in presenting to us "a perfectly consistent character in every trait of thought, feeling, word and action." They must have known Him well and they must have been guided by wisdom from on high while they wrote of Him. No other such character was ever held up for the love and admiration of men. He was perfect and complete and combined in Himself all of the virtues of a perfect man and all of the attributes of the infinite God.

Four such men as Matthew, Mark, Luke and John could never have originated such a character as that of Jesus Christ. He must have existed in that day and if He existed He must have been both human and divine. It is a profound observation of Hugh Miller that "no dramatist can draw taller men than himself." Even Rousseau confessed that "the conception and execution of such a character as that of Jesus Christ would be a greater miracle than its existence." It is easier to believe in the existence and divinity of Christ than to believe that four unlearned men could have conceived and drawn such a character by their

own skill had He never existed. He must have been the divine being He claimed to be. He was too wise to be deceived and too good to deceive. He was and is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever, the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely," worthy of the love and confidence of all who look to Him for salvation from sin. This book must be divine in its origin because it reveals such a God, such a Savior and such a salvation.

The effects of this revelation upon the lives of men are such as to indicate its heavenly origin. "By their fruits ye shall know them," was the rule our Savior gave by which to judge of the character of teachers. The same rule may be applied to the system of truth presented in the Bible. Wherever it has been received as the rule of faith and practice its beneficial effects have been manifest. In the individual it purifies, refines and ennobles. It reforms, transforms and renews, and makes the man who receives it a nobler and better man in all of the relations of life. It blesses and brightens the home. It elevates both man and woman. In the community it promotes intelligence, thrift and morality. In the world and among nations it leads to the highest form of civilization. In the Church and through its instrumentality it spreads the gospel of good cheer and hope and courage. It refines, ennobles and promotes righteousness, peace and good will among men. Like leaven it spreads and like the

mustard seed it grows, and like a good tree bears good fruit wherever it is planted. In the early ages of the Church, notwithstanding the opposition with which it met, it spread so rapidly that it soon made itself felt in all parts of the Roman empire.

In our day it is rapidly securing its right to be heard and accepted in all lands of the earth. It is evincing its power more and more to become a light to lighten the Gentiles and it is yet to become the glory of the people Israel. It bears fruits of peace and purity, joy and salvation wherever it grows and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. Its effects are so beneficial that it must be from God, the Father of all mercies, and the God of all love. The Church universal accepts it as from God. The miracles wrought by those who wrote it and the prophecies made by those who revealed it join to proclaim its heavenly source. The book itself and the Christ whom it reveals testify to the fact that it is of God. The fruits of its teaching in the lives of men and communities, of peoples and nations are such as to attest its divine origin.

"This is the judge that ends the strife
Where wit and wisdom fail;
My guide to everlasting life
Through all this gloomy vale."

CHAPTER III

THE BOOKS WE HAVE ARE THE BIBLE, AND THEY ONLY ARE THE BIBLE

I was once asked, by a young man, to indicate the reasons why certain books are held by the Church to be entitled to a place in the Bible and why certain other books are denied such a place — why we accept certain books as inspired and reject others as not inspired? The general answer to this question is that there is sufficient evidence in favor of the one class and not enough in behalf of the other class. This will become plain as we review the testimony for the books generally accepted as inspired and the evidence against those which have been denied a place in the Bible.

When God was pleased to reveal His will to man He took great pains to have that revelation kept whole and uncorrupted. He selected the *people* Israel to be the guardians of that revelation under the former dispensation and the Church of Jesus Christ under the present dispensation. It is mentioned as one of the special honors and privileges of the people of Israel that "to them the oracles of God were committed." We are informed in Deuteronomy 31:25, 26, that when

Moses gave the law "He commanded the Levites, which bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God that it may be there for a witness against thee." The ark was a chest in which the law, Aaron's rod and the manna were kept. (Hebrews 9:4.) This ark was placed in the Holy of holies, the most sacred place of the tabernacle, and afterwards of the temple, into which only the high priest might enter. Josephus, a learned Jewish historian, who lived in the age of the apostle Paul, informs us that *every tribe* was furnished with a copy of the law. Each *priest and Levite* was provided with a copy to guide him in the public worship. Then, since the book contained the law of the land, *the king*, when kings arose, had a copy to guide him in the administration of the affairs of state. Hence we read in II Kings, 22:9-11, this direction, "He shall write him a copy of the law in a book, out of that which is before the priests and Levites." Thus it appears that the chosen people, the priests and Levites and the king kept guard over the precious revelation God had given to man. The writings of Joshua were added to the law and deposited in the ark of the covenant with the law, and each prophet who spake in the name of the Lord wrought a sign to attest his claim to be a messenger from God and delivered his message that it, too, might be placed in the ark along with those

which had already been placed there for a witness against the people, as well as a guide to them so long as they desired to be guided by Jehovah. Thus book after book was added until the prophetic gift ceased with Malachi, to be renewed with the great prophet whom he predicted should come to prepare the way of the Lord. The uniform tradition among the Jews is that Ezra, the scribe and an inspired man, collected the sacred books thus prepared that they might be preserved for future generations. United with him in this work were the members of the Great Synagogue, some of whom were prophets and had prepared some of these books, and who made copies to be circulated among the people. This collection of books was accepted as the rule of faith and practice and was read in the synagogues every Sabbath day throughout the land of Palestine till the coming of Christ. Long before that time the Hebrew had ceased to be generally spoken and all of these books had been translated into Greek, as may be seen in the Septuagint version made 280 B. C. and to be found in the libraries of this day. It is true some other books have been added to that by human hands but, at the proper place, they will be shown to have no right to be thus associated with God's Word. It is beyond all dispute that we have in the Hebrew Bibles of today just the books, no more and no less, that were received, read and translated nearly three hundred years before Christ.

Now since we have already considered the question of the inspiration of the Bible, the question which we should ask and answer is this: "Are the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament entitled to a place in the Bible?" and the further question: "Are these the only books that have a right to such place there?"

These two questions will be treated together for the reason that most of the reasons that go to establish the right of the one class to a place in the rule of faith and practice will disprove the right of the other class, the Apocryphal books, to a place in the Canon. Dr. Alexander tells us that the word canon is derived from a Greek word which literally signifies a rule and that it is so used in the New Testament, where Paul writes to the Christians at Philippi, Chapter 3:16, "Let us walk by the same rule." As the inspired books are the authoritative rule to regulate our faith and practice, the Early Fathers gave them this name: all such books were called Canonical. Irenaeus speaks of the Holy Scriptures as "the Canon of the Truth." Clement of Alexandria calls them "the True Evangelical Canon," and Eusebius names them "the Ecclesiastical Canon." Athanasius speaks of three kinds of books, "1. The Canonical. 2. Such as may be read. 3. The Apocryphal." The word Apocryphal signifies hidden, obscure, without authority. It is employed to designate such writings as do not possess sufficient evidence to entitle them to a place

in the Canon. The Council of Laodicea, A. D. 363, ordered that none but Canonical books be read in the churches and enumerated the books of the Old Testament as we have them. But the Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, A. D. 1546, included the six Apocryphal books in its Catalogue and since that date in all editions of the Bible prepared and published by the Church of Rome these books are included and they regard all copies of the Bible imperfect and mutilated which do not contain these books: viz, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and the two books of Maccabees. Protestants do not include these books in the Bible and their Bible societies do not publish them. Hence it becomes a matter of interest to determine what books ought to be included in the Canon and what should be excluded from it.

Let us now review the evidence for and against these two classes of books, the Canonical and the Apocryphal.

It is worthy of note that all of the books of the Old Testament which we admit were included in the Hebrew Bible as it existed when Christ came, and that none of the Apocryphal books were so included. Up to that time no claim had been set up that these latter books should be a part of the Bible. The Canon of the Old Testament had been closed five hundred years before Christ and yet these books had never been included in the Bible. They were evidently written

at a later date. Jerome, a learned man who translated the Old Testament from the Hebrew into Latin, did not recognize the right of these books to be in the Canon as is plain from this language: "This prologue of the Scriptures can serve as a fortified approach to all of the books which we translate from Hebrew into Latin; so that we know that whatever is beyond these must be put in the Apocrypha. Therefore the Book of Wisdom, which is commonly entitled the Wisdom of Solomon, the Book of Jesus the son of Sirach, Judith, Tobias and Pastor, are not in the Canon. We omit the Book of Baruch which does not exist and is not read among the Hebrews." In his preface to Daniel he says this book "among the Hebrews has neither the story of Susannah, nor the Hymn of the Three Youths, nor the fables of Bel and the Dragon." In another place he says, "The songs of the Apocrypha ought to be sung by dead heretics rather than by living ecclesiastics." ("His. Bks. of Bible," Stowe, pp. 544 and 580.)

The authors of the Canonical books claim inspiration while the authors of the Apocryphal books do not, except in the case of the author of Wisdom. It is attributed to Solomon, but that pretension is plainly refuted by the facts that it has quotations from Isaiah and Jeremiah who lived long after the days of Solomon and by the fact that the people of Israel are represented as being in subjection to their enemies, whereas

it is known that in the reign of Solomon the Jews enjoyed peace and great prosperity. The men who were really inspired uniformly claim to speak for God and by His aid. For example, Moses informs us that God promised to "be with his mouth and teach him what he should say" when He sent him to speak unto His people and unto Pharaoh, king of Egypt. The prophets use the formula, "Thus saith the Lord," when they deliver their message. They do not claim to speak in their own name nor by their own wisdom, but in the name and by the authority of God. On the contrary, the authors of the Apocryphal books speak of themselves and betray their weakness and ignorance. The author of Ecclesiasticus entreats his readers to pardon the errors he may have committed and concludes with these words, which are utterly unworthy of inspiration, "If I have done well it is that which I desired, but if slenderly and meanly it is that which I could attain unto." Horne, p. 627.

The contents of the two classes of writings indicate their origins. The Canonical books are the very embodiment of the highest truth concerning God and man and salvation; whereas the Apocryphal books abound in ridiculous and incredible stories. They are inconsistent with themselves, and at variance with the teachings of the Bible. "The absurd story of Tobit, of the driving away of the devil by the smoke of the liver of a certain kind of fish and the healing of the blind

with its gall" could not have been given by inspiration of God.

Christ and His apostles sanction and quote the books of the Hebrew Scriptures but do not so sanction the Apocryphal books. The Jews divided the books of the Bible into three parts: The Law, The Prophets, and The Psalms. In Luke 24: 44, Christ is represented as saying, "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that *all things must be fulfilled which were written* in the *Law* of Moses and in the *Prophets* and in the *Psalms* concerning me. Then opened He their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures." He bids them "search the Scriptures," condemns them for "not knowing the Scriptures" and declares that the Scriptures "cannot be broken." He proves His teachings from the Scriptures and says repeatedly that such and such thing came to pass "that the Scripture might be fulfilled." Now the Scriptures which He quoted, which He read in the synagogues, from which He preached and approved of as from God was the Hebrew Scriptures which the Jews of that day used and which we possess to this day. His apostles were equally ready to quote and approve the Hebrew Scriptures. Paul declared that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and Peter said, "Prophecy came not in the old time by the will of man but holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Other New Testament writers are equally em-

phatic in their endorsement of the Old Testament Scriptures. They all approve of and quote from the inspired books but never sanction the Apocrypha.

When we compare the Hebrew Bibles which we have and from which our Bible is translated, with those in the hands of the Jews, we find that they are identical, book for book and line for line, no more and no less. There is perfect agreement between the Protestant and the Jew as to the Canonical books of the Old Testament. As Dr. Alexander well observed, "When we remember the differences that have existed between the two on religious beliefs we can see how the two have been mutually safeguards of the inspired books, to preserve them from alteration by one party or the other. We claim a place in the Canon for no book which they do not acknowledge to be inspired and they bring no accusation against us for having mutilated the sacred volume by abstracting from it any book or chapter."

These inspired books were received by the Early Church and the Apocryphal books were not so received for more than four hundred years and never admitted into the Canon till the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century.

The books of the Old Testament which we have were given through inspired men to the Jews, by whom they were kept till the coming of Christ. He endorsed them and taught them to His apostles, who in turn taught them and commended

them to others as the Word of God "able to make them wise unto salvation." Here is the meeting point of Jew and Gentile. Both receive the Old Testament as the Word of God. Hear the testimony of each. Josephus, the Jewish historian, gives this remarkable testimony: "We have only two and twenty books which are to be believed as of divine authority, of which five are the books of Moses. From the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, the son of Xerxes, king of Persia, the prophets have written thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and instruction of life for the use of men." In this enumeration the Jews reckon the twelve minor prophets as one book, the Book of Ruth as an addition to Judges and Lamentation as an appendage to Jeremiah, thus reducing our number thirty-nine to their twenty-two, just the number of the letters in their alphabet. Turn now to the testimony of one of the early Christian writers Mileto, of Sardis, probably lived less than a hundred years after Josephus, went to Palestine for the express purpose of satisfying himself as to the Canon of the Old Testament and thus gives the result of his investigation: "I went to the East, and coming to the very place where these things were preached and transacted, I have accurately learned the books of the Old Testament. The names are the following," giving a list of the very books we have except that he seems to include Esther in Ezra by whom some supposed it

to have been written. Origen, A. D. 230, who spent much time in Palestine, and who was a fine Hebrew scholar, mentions all of our books without exception and gives none of the Apocryphal books. The two councils of Laodicea and Carthage, A. D. 363 and 397, bear the same testimony. The uniform testimony of the Christian Church for four hundred years of its purest period is in favor of the inspired books which are contained in the Old Testament as we have it, and opposed to the admission of the books called Apocryphal books. From all of the catalogues made by individuals and councils in the early ages these books are excluded. By the best of the fathers they are disowned, and by the earliest councils they are forbidden a hearing in the churches. They were not allowed to be read then even " for example of life and instruction in manners," as was afterwards allowed, by which practice they gradually gained a subordinate place in the darker days of the Church. The books which are contained in the Hebrew Bible, whose authors claimed inspiration and sustained that claim by signs and miracles, the books whose contents are so worthy of a divine origin, the books sanctioned by Christ and His apostles and received by the Early Church and certified to us by the words of witnesses of that day, by catalogues of individuals and councils, by versions and translations, these and these alone are the books which we believe to be entitled to a place in the inspired Word of God.

The line of reasoning by which the Canonicity of the books of the New Testament is established is very similar to that by which it has been sought to show that the books contained in the Old Testament have a right to be there. In addition to the evidences of the inspiration of these books as given in the former chapter the following outline embraces the principal evidences of their claim to a place in the Canon as well as the main reasons why other books are not entitled to a place there. The twenty-seven books are now in the New Testament, are now admitted as a part of the Canon and no others have ever been so admitted. Their presence must be accounted for and the absence of others explained. The former won a place there by the character and qualifications of their authors. They were men of God who came to reveal His will. As they wrought their miracles by His power so they revealed truth through His wisdom and under the influence of His Spirit. Their messages were received as the messages of God to man and were, by unanimous consent, given a place in the Canon. Other books failed to win such a place because they did not present sufficient evidence.

The authors of the books of the New Testament, like those of the Old, uniformly claim to be speaking for God. Both Paul and Peter speak of themselves as apostles of Jesus Christ. An apostle is one who had seen Christ, one who had the power of working miracles and one inspired to

reveal God's will. Luke says (Acts 1:1, 2, 4, 8), "The former treatise have I made, O Theophelus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which He was taken up, after that He *through the Holy Ghost*, had given commandment unto the apostles whom He had chosen." He tells us what that command was in the fourth verse and in the eighth verse says, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." In the second chapter he tells how "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues *as the Spirit gave them utterance*." No such claim was either made or verified by any of those who wrote the obscure books which might be candidates for admission into the Canon.

The substance and form of the contents of the New Testament are such as to confirm the claim of the authors. No one who reads the New Testament can fail to be impressed with the sublimity of its moral and spiritual teachings, and no one who reads the Apocryphal gospels and epistles can refuse to admit that they are in many respects puerile, and in all respects far inferior to the writings of the apostles and evangelists.

The people who early heard and read what these men of God wrote and said, and who witnessed the miracles they wrought were many of them convinced that they were from God, and gave their

testimony in their behalf. The Early Church received the Gospels, the Acts and the Epistles as a revelation of God's will. They and those who followed them in the course of time read them in their churches, appealed to them in their discussions, enrolled them in their catalogues along with the Canonical books of the Old Testament and endorsed them in their councils and treated no other books after the same manner. Christ and His apostles gave their sanction to this part of the Bible equally with the other part. God had said of Christ, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." When Christ entered upon His work He said (John 12:49), "The Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." To the unbelieving Jews He said (John 5:46-47), "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings how can ye believe my words?" He promised guidance to His apostles on four different occasions according to the words in Matthew 10:19, 20, "But when they deliver you up take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." He gave them power to work miracles that men might believe their claim to teach in God's name. Five out of the eight New Testament writers were apostles, Matthew, Peter, James,

John and Jude, who could thus attest their teachings. Luke was an intimate companion of Paul and Mark of Peter. Luke 10:7 is quoted as Scripture by Paul in I Timothy 5:18, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." Papias, Justin, Irenæus and Origen all speak of Mark's gospel as received and as having been dictated and sanctioned by Peter. (See also Hebrew 1:1, I John 4:1, II Peter 3:15, 16.) Thus Christ and His apostles teach us that the words they spake are entitled to a place in the rule of faith equally with the words of Moses and the Prophets.

The general agreement of the Christian Church from the days of Christ to the present, in the reception of all of the books of the New Testament, furnishes a strong evidence in favor of their right to a place in the Bible. Each book or message or letter was examined on its own merits by the Early Church and admitted to a place among its sacred writings.

These books were publicly read in the churches so that they could easily have been challenged had they not been genuine. Paul directs that his epistle to the Colossians be read in the church of Laodicea and that the Colossians read that from Laodicea. Justin Martyr and Tertullian both bear witness to the fact that at their meetings on the first day of the week they "read the Prophets and the Scriptures."

The books of the New Testament are constantly appealed to and quoted by the early Christian

Fathers in discussing any point of faith or in inculcating any line of duty. They evidently regarded them of supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice. They admitted these and only these to a place in the Canon of the New Testament.

Catalogues of these books were formed, from a very early day, both by individuals and councils that others might see and know what books they regarded as inspired. Such lists were made by Origen, Jerome, Eusebius and others and by the councils of Laodicea and Carthage. These correspond with the lists of the books in our Bibles. Out of thirteen such lists seven agree perfectly with our Canon and several others differ only in the omission of the book of Revelation because it had fallen into some discredit on account of the use made of it by the "Millenarians," but the sober thought of the Church has continued to credit the full inspiration of this beautiful book by the apostle John. It would extend this subject too far to take up the evidences as to each separate book. You will find such treatment in Alexander, Horne or Angus. These books and these alone are supported in their claim to inspiration by *miracles* wrought and testified to by credible witnesses, by *prophecies* made and fulfilled to the letter, by the character, harmony and holiness of their *teaching,* by the *character of the Christ* and by the *influence exerted upon the individual, the home, the nation and the world.*

No books but these can present such claims to a place in the Bible as may be seen in such facts as these: viz, they have had their place from the time of the apostle John, who outlived the other apostles and doubtless gave his attention and guidance in the settlement of the New Testament Canon; their authors, conscious that they spake under the influence of the Spirit, claimed to be from God and wrought miracles to attest that claim; that Christ and His inspired apostles put these teachings on precisely the same basis of inspiration as the Old Testament; that the Early Church and the Church universal has received these books and only these as having a right to a place in the Canon of the New Testament, and has handed down to us lists, versions and expositions of these books of eternal life. Other books may be good in their place, but when it comes to a direct, authoritative communication from God to man, as to duty and salvation, we must turn to the books of this Bible, whose authors "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." If this book be inspired and the books it contains have a right to a place there, with what reverence we should receive and with what diligence and earnestness we should read and study its holy pages!

"Holy Bible, book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine;
Mine to tell me whence I came,
Mine to teach me what I am;

" Mine to chide me when I rove,
Mine to show a Savior's love;
Mine art thou, to guide my feet,
Mine, to judge, condemn, acquit;

" Mine, to comfort in distress,
If the Holy Spirit bless;
Mine, to show by living faith,
Man can triumph over death;

" Mine to tell of joys to come,
And the rebel sinner's doom:
Holy Bible, book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine."

CHAPTER IV

THE BIBLE THE RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

To everyone who claims allegiance to God and who accepts the Bible as the inspired revelation of His will there can be but one supreme rule of faith and practice. That rule is the Word of God. This lesson needs to be enforced no less now than in the day when the prophet Isaiah wrote, "To the Law and the Testimony; if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them." The prediction had been made that the time would come when the people of God would be tempted to turn away from the testimony of the Lord and look for wisdom and guidance from those who sought after "familiar spirits"; when they should no longer look to God alone for guidance and direction but should seek other means of gaining a knowledge of truth and duty. Hence God warns them against this temptation and enforces upon them a strict rule as to the use of His Law as their guide in truth and duty. If they should be invited by their neighbors to seek after wizards and familiar spirits they were to answer, "Should not a people

seek after their God?" Had they not sworn allegiance to Jehovah? Were they not enjoying blessings at His hands? Had He not guided them wisely and well thus far? Would it not be folly to turn away from Him to serve other gods or to consult those who pretended to communicate with the Devil, and with other wicked spirits? Should they speak in behalf of the living to the dead? On the contrary, should they not hear the voice of the Lord their God as He commanded them to apply to the "Law and Testimony" for a knowledge of His revealed will? If any teachers should come unto them not speaking according to this Word, they might be sure there was no light in them, that they had not been taught of God, that they were still in the darkness of ignorance and sin. To follow such teachers would lead them away from God, the source of life and light, into darkness and death. To the "Law and Testimony" of God, then, they were to resort as being the true and only rule of faith and practice. In opposition to all other methods of arriving at a knowledge of what should be received as true, God commands the people to apply to His Word as the only lawful source of spiritual knowledge and as the sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice.

At that time the law and other portions of God's revealed Word had been given to the people and that was declared to be the only legitimate rule by which they should decide what was right and true. To the revelation which was in the posses-

sion of the Church at that period God was pleased to add much more both in the Old and the New Testaments. He fully endorsed as true and Canonical all that had been placed in the Bible up to the time when He came on earth in human form. He then inspired men to write down His own words and to make still further revelations of His will. All of these writings were, in His providence, placed together and, from the earliest days of Christianity, have been received as parts of God's revealed will. If it was then a law of God's spiritual kingdom that *no one should go outside of this divine revelation* in order to learn what to believe and practice, it is still the law of that kingdom. God has made a clear and sufficient revelation of His will to man and requires him to *find in that alone what he should believe concerning God and what duty God requires of him.* This is a most important position for every church and for every individual that would do that which is acceptable in the sight of the Lord God of heaven. To every church and for every individual the Bible should be the sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice. And yet, plain and obvious as this teaching seems to be, it has frequently been overlooked. There is in the human heart a constant tendency to turn away from God and follow that which is human and sinful. Man is prone to set up his opinion as a guide rather than to submit himself to the will and authority of God as made known in His Word.

Even the Church has not been free from the power and influence of this tendency. At certain periods of her history she has seemed to forget this direction, and has assumed to herself the authority to decree rites, enforce rules and lay down terms of membership not authorized in the Word of God. The early ministers of the gospel, ordained by Christ Himself, were scarcely in their graves before men arose and taught for doctrines the commandments of men. Men arose who lorded it over the consciences of their fellowmen and soon reduced the free Church of God to a spiritual despotism, and made merchandise of the most holy privileges and offices of the Church. By failing to adhere to the rule God had given, the Church sold herself to the state and elevated Constantine the Great to the chief place in the Church as well as in the state. The consequence was that, while the Church was no longer persecuted and enjoyed an outward appearance of prosperity, she was shorn of her spiritual power and grew more and more corrupt, until in the Dark Ages she almost forfeited her right to be called the Church of Christ. This she did sometimes by allowing the state to rule and control her affairs and at other times by seeking to manage the affairs of the state. In both ways she violated the constitution which gave her a right to exist and forgot the declaration of the great Head of the Church when He said, "My kingdom is not of this world."

During all of this long and dreary time of dark-

ness there were many who always refused to bow the knee to Baal and who, in the face of the most bitter persecution, witnessed for Christ and for His truth, and who sought earnestly to preserve His Church pure and unmixed with the affairs of the state. There is good evidence for believing that there never was a time when there were not men who were willing to lay down their lives for Christ and for the word of His truth, that even in the darkest days of the Dark Ages there were in the valleys of the Piedmont and in the hills of Scotland and in parts of Ireland many who never did submit to the degenerate rule of the times, but maintained the doctrines and government of the New Testament pure and unadulterated. We find examples of such persons in the Waldensian Church, whose representative said in the Presbyterian Council, a few years ago, that they were not "*Re*formed" because they had never been "*de*formed"; in the Culdee Church with its representative form of church government, and in that church in Ireland that had a bishop for each of its 365 churches. Still it must be admitted that the vast majority of those who at that time claimed to be Christ's representatives on the earth gave to the world a very deformed picture of the life and teaching of Him who was "meek and lowly in spirit" and "holy, harmless and undefiled and separate from sinners." The reason why they were so far astray was that they had forsaken the word of His truth and substituted in its

stead the traditions and opinions of men. They left the light of God's truth and sought to regulate the kingdom of Christ according to the principles and maxims of the world. They neglected to hear and heed the divine command, " To the Law and Testimony."

It was not till Luther and Calvin and others of that day came to listen to this command and to believe that this book was intended of God for the people as well as for the priests, that there was brought about the much needed reformation in the Church. Then it was that the departures of the Church from the rule of faith were brought to light under the bright shining of the truth of God as it beamed forth from the pages of His Holy Word. It was then that first one evil and then another were banished from the Church until at last it was thought that she was comparatively free from the commandments of men, but subsequent events showed that the state was unwilling to give up her part in the management of the Church, and the Church was unwilling to be released entirely from the state and to conform herself fully to the Word of God, without any regard to the traditions of man. Against both Church and state there arose men who claimed that the state had no right to interfere with religion, and that each man should be permitted to take the Bible as the sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice, and that he had also the right to read and study that book and decide for himself in the fear of God what it

taught him to believe, to do, and to hope. In other words, that the Bible was the only infallible rule of faith and practice and that each individual had the right of private judgment as to what it taught and liberty to believe and live according to that teaching. This is the position of the Protestant Church. Luther translated and gave the Bible to the people. Calvin said, "We must come to the Word. If we deviate from it, though we run with celerity, we will be *out of course* and will not reach the goal. The way to the divine countenance and favor is a labyrinth, so that unless we are guided by the line of the Word we cannot approach unto God." And Bishop Chillingworth said, "The Bible is the religion of Protestants." The Westminster Assembly in its Confession of Faith said: "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture or may by good and necessary consequences be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added." "And the *authority* of the Scriptures, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God the author thereof; and therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God." And, "The supreme *judge*, by which all controversies of religion are to be decided . . . can be none other but the *Holy Spirit* speaking in the Scripture." This position is in

exact harmony with the teaching of the Bible itself. It claims to lead men to God and to eternal life. It claims to be given by inspiration of God and to be " able to make thee wise unto salvation." (II Timothy 3: 15.) This claim the experience of hundreds and thousands of God's people confirm. They were in darkness and sorrow. They came to this revelation of the will of God for their salvation and found light and comfort and salvation.

The Bible contains all that needs to be known for the salvation of our souls and the regulation of our lives. Here we may learn the doctrines of grace, the government of the Church and the worship of the sanctuary. Hence God expects His Church and each member of it to learn from the Bible what he is to believe concerning Him and what duty He requires of him.

There is no other such book as the Bible. No other book can compare with it in the character of its teaching, the purity and harmony of its purpose or in effect upon life and character. No other is sustained by such an array of evidence for inspiration. Its success in winning a place of power and influence over the hearts and lives of men, the miracles wrought to attest the claims to inspiration of those who wrote it, its prophecies made and fulfilled, and the suitableness to our needs of the salvation which it offers, and the Christ whom it makes known, all attest it to be a revelation from the living and true God. As, therefore, we would listen to our King, we should

heed the teaching of His Word. It is the divine constitution of His Church. It is the statute book of His spiritual commonwealth. It is the Guide-book of travelers from time to eternity. It is the sole and sufficient rule and revelation of God's will.

It follows that *every thing contrary to this holy Word* is sinful and wrong. Sin is lawlessness. Anything that does not come up to the requirements of the law is sin and anything that goes beyond what the law allows is sin. This law requires truth in the heart and love to God and man to their fullest degree and, therefore, any want of conformity unto this law in thought, or feeling, or motive, or word, or deed is sin. This law forbids all crimes against man and all offenses against God and, therefore, all transgression of His law is sin.

It follows also that "*nothing besides*" *or in addition to this Word can* be made a law by the Church to bind the conscience. God alone is the Lawgiver and He is to be the final Judge of the quick and the dead. His law is perfect and sufficient for the regulation of the affairs of His kingdom and for the guidance of His subjects. The Church is not appointed to make laws. It must keep, and teach and interpret the law, but is not allowed to add anything to it nor to take anything away from it. It may press home the teachings of the law upon the conscience and enforce the law by the means which God has ordained.

But the Church may not make rules and regulations not authorized in the Bible, nor may she decree rites and ceremonies not taught there.

The Church must teach and spread the *doctrines* she finds revealed in this Word but may add no others. She may set up the *government* taught by Christ and His apostles but should attempt no other. She should teach and keep the *sacraments* taught in the Word, but has no authority to change these nor to add others. She should expound the *terms of church membership* given by Christ and His apostles, but should require no more and no less. She should insist, according to the Bible, that men in their moral conduct should deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that they should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world " and that they should love the Lord their God with all of their hearts, with all of their minds, with all of their souls, and with all of their strength, and their neighbors as themselves "— this much, no more and no less. She should insist upon the worship of God as authorized in the Bible but not otherwise. In short, since the Bible is a perfect and complete rule of faith and practice, men should study it diligently and seek to conform their belief and practice to its teachings as to doctrine, government, worship, sacraments and life. Thus will they be saved from rationalism which would come with its preconceived opinions and seek to make the teachings of God conform to their views, from ritualism

which would cover over the simple worship of the gospel with forms and ceremonies, and from will worship which would attempt to please God by offering sacrifices and worship which He hath not required nor approved. Thus will men be induced to read and study the Bible that they may know the truth which God hath revealed for their salvation and spiritual benefit. Thus will they learn the way of life and have awakened in their hearts a desire to spread the knowledge of divine truth. If, then, you have learned any important truth or duty, you are under obligation to communicate it to others. If, then, you have learned to know the way of life, teach it to others. If you understand the plan of salvation, try to make it plain to those who do not know it. If you have received the news of salvation, tell it to others till all know the way, till every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father — till the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His anointed.

CHAPTER V

GOD, HIS EXISTENCE AND ATTRIBUTES

The existence of God lies at the foundation of all true religion and the knowledge of God is essential to all acceptable worship. If there were no God there would be no religion, and if there were no knowledge of God there could be no true worship. Not ignorance but intelligence is the mother of devotion. The better we know God the more we will love and the better we will serve Him. "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

It is true that our knowledge of God cannot be full and complete, yet it may be sufficient. While we cannot comprehend God we may apprehend Him. We can know that He exists and that He is wise and powerful and good and that "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

That there is one infinite and eternal First Cause, Creator and Maker of all things is plain to all whose minds are not blinded and whose hearts are not hardened by sin. Only the fool hath said in his heart there is no God, and even he hath said this not for lack of evidence but for

lack of willingness to acknowledge that there is one to whom he must at last give account. The evidences which unite with the Bible in teaching the existence of God are many and strong. Each leads up to God and all combine to prepare the mind to accept readily the plain and direct teaching of the Word.

The very fact that the mind of man has conceived and continued along the ages to entertain the idea of God is a presumptive evidence in favor of the existence of God. Unless such an ideal exists, how are we to explain the rise of such an idea? Man could not think of God unless there were a God to think about. Again, it is a law of the mind that every effect must have an adequate cause. When we behold ourselves, the earth, the heavens and the sea, we conclude that all of these effects must have had a cause, and as no human power can create the smallest plant or flower it must have been an Omnipotent Being who caused all of the wonderful effects of heaven and earth and sea to come into existence. These things could not have come by chance. They could not have just happened. They must have sprung from the creative mind and power of the infinite God. Only God could create and preserve all the number and variety of effects which we behold around us. As it is written, "Every house is built by some one. But He that built all things is God." "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth forth His handy work.

Day unto day and night unto night showeth knowledge of Him."

On every side we see unmistakable evidences of design. Thus we are taught not only that there is a God, but that He is wise and powerful and good. Behold evidences of such design and wisdom in the structure of each plant and animal, each night and day, each season of the year and in the adaptation of all things to the welfare and happiness of man. See how He has adapted the light to the eye, the air to the lungs, food to the body, truth to the mind, love to the heart, authority to the will and law to the conscience. Wherever there is design there must be a designer — wherever there is law there must be a lawgiver.

The constitution of our own moral nature is such as to lead us to infer the moral character of God. It is true that our souls have been perverted by sin. Still the soul retains enough of its original nature to indicate that it came from God. On examination we find that pleasure follows upon the performance of actions which are virtuous, and that pain accompanies the doing of that which we know to be wrong. We are thus reminded that the Being by whom we were made ordained that virtue should be rewarded and vice punished. He must, therefore, be just and upright who ordained this law.

We find that there is within every soul a faculty which not only distinguishes between the right and the wrong, but causes certain forebodings lest the

evil which we have done shall bring upon us not only present pain but future punishment, and that the good which we do not only gives pleasure in the present but meets the approval of the highest good. We are thus reminded to reverence Him by whom we were made and to stand in awe of Him as of an upright judge.

Then when we reflect that both human society and civil government frown upon that which is wrong and approve that which is right, we are led to believe that God, by whom these were ordained, will surely punish the evil and reward the good. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" "Yes," our conscience replies, "'He will render unto every man according to his deeds and He will by no means clear the guilty,' but 'will bring everything into judgment.'" "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." (Ecclesiastes 12: 14.)

The fact that these ideas of God and of right and wrong are universal — that no nation, tribe or people has ever been found where there was not some idea of God and retribution — plainly shows that God not only exists, but that He has so revealed Himself that men are without excuse if they do not worship and serve Him as their Lord and their God. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen,

being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." (Romans 1:19, 20.)

This conclusion is verified by the plain and explicit teachings of the Bible. "For there is one God; and there is none other but He." (Mark 12:32.) "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Genesis 1:1.) "All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:3.) "He that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6.)

From the Bible we learn that while there is but one only living and true God — one in divine essence and one in divine plan and purpose — that this one infinite Being exists in a threefold manifestation or personality, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. There are two sets of passages which reveal at once the unity and the diversity in the Godhead. If in the single soul of man there be discovered three distinct modes of consciousness, the power to think, the power to feel and the power to will, and yet the unity of the soul is not destroyed, we should not be surprised to find that in the Godhead there is but one divine essence and yet three manifestations of that essence in the persons we call the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Turn to the Word of God and hear both the unity and the diversity of the Godhead taught.

"The Lord our God is one God." (Mark 12:29.) "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3.) "Who hath declared this from the ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord? And there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me." (Isaiah 45:21, 22.) "I and my father are one." The perfect harmony in nature, in revelation, in providence and in the plan of redemption indicates that there is but one infinite Cause, Creator, Preserver and Ruler over all things in heaven and in earth.

There are other passages which teach with equal definiteness that this one divine essence manifests itself in three different modes. These modes or manifestations are called persons, not in the sense that they are separate and independent individuals, but that each has a name, a relation and a property peculiar to itself, and that each has the power of intelligent thought, will and action. To each the personal pronouns, I, thou, and he, are applied and to each the names, attributes, works and worship of God are ascribed. Each is a person and yet each is of the same divine essence united in the Godhead as one God. This has been illustrated in this way:

"Light is one substance with three properties, the actinic, luminiferous and calorific. The properties of light are distinct but they can not be separated from each other. Where the one is the others are. The actinic can neither be seen nor felt. The calorific can

not be seen but may be felt. The luminiferous is both seen and felt, and is the revelation and expression of the other two. Light is one and yet three. Light is three and yet one.

"Holy Scripture says: 'God is Light.' God is one substance yet three persons — Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The personalities are distinct but they can not be separated from each other. Where the one is the others are. Where the Father is the Son and Spirit are. Where the Son is the Father and Spirit are. Where the Spirit is the Father and Son are. The Father can neither be seen nor felt. The Spirit can not be seen but may be felt. The Son may be both seen and felt and is the revelation and expression of the other two. What an absurdity to reject any two of the properties and call the remaining one light! What an absurdity to reject any two of the persons and call the remaining one God. God is one and yet three, God is three and yet one."

The names given to these modes of divine essence are, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. The peculiar property of the Father is that the Father begets, the Son is begotten and the Spirit proceeds, or paternity, filiation and procession. "These properties distinguish the persons of the Trinity so that we can speak of one without, at the same time, speaking of another."

In function, while it is always God acting, the Father is represented as sending and the Son as coming and the Spirit as proceeding. The Father provides the plan of redemption, the Son executes and the Holy Spirit applies it to the hearts and

lives of men. The Father sends the Son. The Father and the Son send the Spirit and the Spirit proceeds from both. While, therefore, each is equally divine and each partakes equally of the divine essence, yet each has His peculiar name, property and function and each manifests the divine essence in the discharge of certain acts separate and distinct from those of the others. For example the Father says of the Son, " This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." The Son says, " My meat and my drink is to do the will of my Father," and referring to the Holy Spirit He says, " I will send you another comforter that he may abide with you forever," and " He shall guide you into all truth." Hence when the apostles were sent forth they were to recognize this distinction in the Trinity by baptizing " in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," and in pronouncing the benediction they were to say, " The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen." (II Corinthians 13: 14.) That there are mysteries connected with this subject is freely admitted, for God is a mystery and life is a mystery and man is a mystery and we are surrounded by mysteries. While it is *above* reason it is *not contrary* to reason that there should be variety in unity and unity in variety in the Godhead, when we behold such unity and variety in nature, in man and in everything which God has made. Let us ever continue to bow

reverently before God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, one God in substance, one in purpose and one in glory, power and holiness.

The attributes of God are those qualities or properties which constitute Him the Being that He is. If any one of them were lacking He would not be God. All of these combined and all inhering in the divine essence go to make up our ideal of the great Being whom we love and serve as "a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth." According to this definition, which is based on the Bible, God is a spirit and has not a body like men. He is expressly called a spirit by the Savior in His interview with the woman of Samaria: "God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23.) He is called the Father of our spirits and the Framer of our bodies and we are taught that man was made, originally, in the likeness of God. That likeness was not a bodily but a spiritual likeness. The soul of man was endowed by its Creator with the power of thought, feeling and will, and was made like God in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, with dominion over the creature which God had made upon the earth. If our spirits be capable of thought, feeling and will in a finite degree the spirit of God must be capable of thinking, feeling and willing in an infinite degree. We know that we do

think and feel and will and infer with confidence that the God who made us possesses like powers — that He is a spirit and has all of the properties of a personal agent. God is a spirit. He is a personal spirit and while one in divine essence, He exists in a threefold personality. It is further evident that He is infinite, for to have created all things out of nothing required infinite wisdom and power. To give life to a single plant is far beyond the power of the greatest and wisest philosopher on earth. How much more then would infinite power be required to bring into existence and to sustain, when made, the world in which we live and the system of which it is but a small member? God is infinite, without limits or boundaries in His being and in His attributes. He fills all space with His immensity, so that He is in every place beholding the good and the evil. He is both omnipresent and omniscient. It was such a view of God which so impressed the Psalmist when he wrote: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand uphold me." (Psalm 139:7.)

God is likewise eternal. There never was a time in the eternity past when God did not exist and there will never be a time in the eternity fu-

ture when God shall cease to exist. "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God."

He is unchangeable. This follows from His perfection. If he were imperfect he would have to change his plans either because he could not foresee what would arise or because he could not provide for that which had arisen. But being infinite, He knows beforehand everything that can possibly happen and is able to meet and overcome each and every difficulty or enemy. "I am Jehovah; I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." He is "the same yesterday, today and forever."

He is infinite in His wisdom. He not only knows all things but He knows how to use the best means for the accomplishment of the wisest ends and purposes. His wisdom was displayed in His works of creation, providence and redemption.

It required infinite wisdom to make all things that are in the heavens above, in the earth beneath and in the waters under the earth; it required infinite wisdom to preserve and govern all creatures in all of their ways; but it required the greatest wisdom to devise and bring to completion that plan by which lost sinners could be rescued and saved from the guilt and power and pollution of sin and be brought back into the family of God and made heirs of the inheritance of the saints in light.

He is infinite in His power. This power was made known in His creation of all things out of

nothing by the word of His power. To bring something out of nothing seems incredible to man, but God spake and worlds sprang into existence and sun and moon and stars took their places in the firmament of heaven and have, ever since, been kept there and made to move in perfect harmony in the orbits to which God assigned them, forever singing as they shine, "The hand that made us is divine."

To govern the material and spiritual universe requires the infinite power of God; and to meet and overcome all of the spiritual foes of God and man demands the infinite power of Jehovah. Hence He who undertook our redemption had to be able to say, "All power in heaven and on earth is in my hands."

He is infinite in His holiness. No stain of sin is on His spotless character. He is "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens." Before His face the holy angels of Heaven veil their faces and cry, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts — the whole earth is full of thy glory."

He is perfectly just. He holds the balances with a perfectly even hand. As the eternal judge of the quick and the dead He will surely do right. He will by no means clear the guilty but will "render unto every man according to his deeds."

He is infinitely good. His goodness is that disposition of His nature which prompts Him to bestow well-being upon all of His creatures so

far as He can do so without violating His law and doing violence to His other attributes. It includes His mercy, which is goodness exercised toward the guilty and sinful and unworthy. His goodness was shown in creating man in His own image and in surrounding Him with so many things to administer to his comfort and pleasure. It was shown in sparing the sinner after he disowned his God and so forfeited all right to His Love and favor. It was shown in the blessings which were scattered along the way of life. It was shown in the gift of His Son to be a savior of the lost sinner. It was shown in the rich provision of grace by which the sinner is saved from the guilt and power and pollution of sin, and it is shown in the beauty, happiness, holiness and security of the home into which He hath promised to bring all who put their trust in Him.

He is infinite in His truth. Because of His fidelity we can trust the senses with which He has endowed us. We can expect the regular return of the seasons. We can depend upon the coming of night and day and may confidently believe that the world will never again be destroyed by flood. We can expect Him always in the future, as always in the past, to be true to His covenant promise. It was because of His faithfulness to His covenant that the sons of Jacob were not consumed when they sinned against Him. It was because of His fidelity to His covenant of grace that all men were not lost when they despised the

covenant for their salvation through Jesus Christ, the gift of the Father's love. It is because of His faithfulness that we have not all been cut off for our sins and inconsistencies. So that the God whom we worship " is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, goodness and truth."

This infinite God sustains certain intimate relations to us out of which spring certain important duties which we owe to Him. He is our Maker. He created us. He made the body of our forefather out of the dust of the ground and breathed into him the breath of life, so that he became a living soul, and each descendant since that time has come into being under a law which God ordained.

He is our Preserver. It is by His sustaining power that we live each day and each hour, for " in Him we live and move and have our being." He is our Redeemer. We were guilty and lost but He loved us and sent His Son to save us. And the Son gave Himself for us that He might bring us back to God and heaven.

He is to be our Judge. " God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained." " For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (II Corinthians 5:10.)

He is our Advocate. He has undertaken to plead our cause in the judgment of the great day. He will plead not what we are or have done, but His own perfect obedience, His own suffering and death and His own perfect righteousness.

He is our King. He is infinitely worthy. He is all-powerful and He must reign till all enemies be put under His feet.

Out of these relations spring important duties which we owe to God. If He made, preserves and redeems us, we should reverence, love, worship and serve Him. "Ye are not your own. Ye are bought with a price — wherefore glorify Him in your bodies and spirits which are His." If He is to be our Judge we should prepare for the account which we must render at His bar. If, in Jesus Christ, he offers to be our Advocate we should place our cause in His hands that He may plead for us in that great day. If He be our King we should be loyal to Him and do all we can to extend the borders of His kingdom. If He be our God we should give Him the love of our hearts, the praise of our lips, the worship of our souls and the service of our lives.

CHAPTER VI

CREATION

Men, in all ages, have sought to know the origin of the universe. Some have concluded that it is eternal; others that it came by chance, and still others that it was evolved under the operation of natural law. That which men have thus vainly guessed God has clearly revealed in His Word. The Bible is the only book that gives a satisfactory account of the origin of the world and of the human race.

The first verse of Genesis teaches us more on this subject than all other books. It tells us *who* the Creator is, *what* He created, *when* He created and *how*.

Who? "God created." It was Jehovah, the infinitely wise and powerful and good, who created all things. They had not always existed, they did not come by chance and they were not evolved by natural law, but they were created and made by the power of God. The word, *bara*, here translated create, is the strongest word the Hebrews had for expressing the idea of an immediate creation out of nothing. It is true that later it was used in a secondary sense of "to form" out

of preëxisting material, but it is also true that when they would express the idea of making something out of nothing, this is the word in their language most appropriate for such expression. If the idea could not be conveyed by this word, then there was no other by which the thought could be expressed. It is plain that the word is here used to express the idea of an absolute creation of something out of nothing, because no mention had been made of preëxisting material, because it is declared that "in the beginning," that is, originally, when things began to be, God created them, and because in the subsequent verses, when the inspired writer comes to describe the process by which God formed the material which He had created into beings and objects of beauty, he uses the word, *asah*, which uniformly means to form or fashion that which had already been created. Having informed us, in the first verse, how the material heavens and earth came into existence by the creative fiat of the Almighty, the writer proceeds to inform us how the matter thus made was brought into forms of beauty and use by the skill and power of God, the Maker of all things. As Dr. Dick has well said, "The manifest design here is to inform us by what steps God brought the rude mass of material into that beautiful assemblage of parts which excites the wonder and admiration of every beholder." The original production of matter out of nothing is set forth first, and then the bringing of that mat-

ter into proper form is revealed to us. There are other passages which confirm this interpretation and throw light upon it. In the 17th of John and 5th verse, Christ refers to the glory which He had with the Father "before the world was," and of a love wherewith the Father loved Him "before the foundation of the world." Then in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and third verse we read, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Here we are expressly taught that God used no material in His original creation, that He did not make the things which are now seen out of things which were apparent, but that He made the heavens and the earth out of nothing.

What God made? In answer to this question it is elsewhere written, "All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made which was made." (John 1:3.) Here in Genesis it is said, "God created the heavens and the earth." These two expressions were intended to represent to men all things, or at least all of the material out of which all things were subsequently made. "The earth" which was to be the habitation of man God made, and the heavens which were stretched above the earth God made also. All things that man could see upon the face of the earth or behold in the heavens above came directly from God the Creator. The material He created directly and immediately by the word of His

power. Then He fashioned this material into such forms of beauty and order as seemed to Him wisest and best.

In the heavens He placed the clouds and the sky and above these the sun, moon and stars.

In the air He made to fly every bird and winged fowl. In the sea He made and placed fish and everything, both small and great, that swims in the water.

On the land He made the grass, the herb, the flower and the trees. In the forests and in the fields He made the beasts and the creeping things, both small and great. Having provided for man a home of beauty and delight, and having created all things to serve his wants and to please his tastes, He made man in His own image and after His own likeness and gave him dominion over all else He had made on the earth.

Thus God proceeded in regular and beautiful order in His work. He first created the material and then on the first day of His bringing order out of confusion and chaos, He made the light. On the second day He made the firmament, including the atmosphere and the clouds. On the third day He divided the sea from the land and caused the grass and herbs and trees to grow.

On the fourth day He made the sun and moon and stars. On the fifth day He made the fish of the sea and the fowl of the air.

On the sixth day He made the cattle, and creeping things and beasts of the forests. Then, last

of all, He made man, the last and highest work of His creation.

Then, having completed His work, God rested on the seventh day from all the work which He had done, "wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." The time when this creation took place was "in the beginning," that is, at the very commencement of time. Not from eternity did matter exist, but was created in the beginning of time. It was then that God made the heavens and the earth. As to when that was no man can tell with any degree of certainty, for man was not then made and God has not revealed the time. The period between the time when God made the material and the time when He fashioned it for a habitation of man may have been a very long or only a short one, for "one day with the Lord is as a thousand years and a thousand years are as one day." (II Peter 3:8.)

As to the time since man was created the Bible does not speak with definiteness. The best interpreters, comparing Scripture with Scripture, place that time at about six thousand years ago. The fact that credible history does not reach back of that period would seem to indicate that it was not before that time. "The silence of history with respect to any event prior to that time seems to teach that the race did not exist before the time indicated by the Mosaic record. If the world and the human race had existed for millions of years before that, how does it happen that not a hint

has come down to us of the innumerable former generations? How is it that civilization can be traced back only to a period which is but as yesterday, if the earth and its inhabitants had no beginning? The want of all records of a higher date, the recent origin of nations and the late invention of arts all concur to show that only a few thousand years have passed since our race came into existence." The poet Lucretius uses this argument for the recent rise of the human race: "Why, beyond the Theban war and the sack of Troy, were there not other poets to celebrate other deeds."

Why does history begin with facts and events of comparatively recent date if the race has lived and wrought for so many thousand of years longer than is understood from the Bible? The recent discoveries in the East all tend to confirm the teaching of the Bible concerning the age of nations and of the earth in its present form.

When we raise the question as to How the heavens and the earth were created the answer is threefold: By the word of His power, out of nothing and very good. He did not have to do as man must when he makes anything, use material already furnished, but He spake the word and called things into existence by the word of His power. He created out of nothing the material and then formed it into the shapes and objects He had planned. Each thing that He made corresponded exactly to the thought that lay in His

mind, so that "God saw every thing that He had made, and behold it was very good." Everything was made according to plan and for a specific purpose, so that when made it was good and useful in its place and order. He made things that were beautiful and things that were useful. He gave to each a nature and a capacity suited to the purpose for which it was made. He had a thought for each and every thing which He made. When He made the members of the mineral kingdom He gave them solid substance and beautiful and regular form. To the members of the vegetable kingdom He gave not only substance and form but, in addition, the mysterious principle of life, showing that He had a thought concerning this department of His creation which He did not have concerning that which was lower. To the animals He gave substance and form and life and in addition instinct. To man, who was to be His representative on earth, He gave not only substance and form and life and instinct but an immortal soul, capable of knowing and loving His great and holy character and of doing His holy will. He made man in His own image and after His own likeness, with a spirit like His own, with mind to know the truth, with heart to love the good, with conscience to approve the right and with will to obey his God. He made him like Himself, in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, with dominion over all of the creatures of His hand. He made him a personal, rational free agent with

power to choose and do good or evil. He surrounded him with everything best suited to promote his welfare and happiness. He placed him in a beautiful garden to dress and keep it. He gave him a companion of his own flesh and blood that she might be as near and dear to him as his own person. He gave him light to please the eye and guide him in the way, air for his lungs, food for his body, truth for his mind, love for his heart, authority for his will and law for his conscience, and then crowned him as king and ruler over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air and the beasts of the field and gave him the earth for his inheritance so long as he remained true and loyal to his Maker. Moreover, God agreed with man, upon condition of perfect obedience for a limited time to confirm him in a state of holiness and to give to him and to all of his posterity the blessings of life eternal, but warned him that if he disobeyed he would secure for himself and for all of his descendants death eternal. Surely man thus endowed, thus surrounded and thus forewarned, must have felt that he and his condition were "very good." As he looked up into the heavens he could exclaim, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth forth His handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge"; and as he meditated upon God's mindfulness of him could say, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God. How great is the sum of them. They cannot be reck-

oned up in order before thee. If I would declare and speak of them they are more than can be numbered."

What practical lessons can we learn from this great fundamental teaching of God concerning creation?

First, a lesson of the infinite wisdom and power of the God whom we worship. His plan was formed from all eternity. He began to reveal that plan when He began His work of creation. Everything He made revealed some thought that lay in His great mind. To form such a plan bespoke His infinite wisdom, but to carry it out in the creation of the heavens and the earth made known more clearly His power and skill as the great Architect. That man who can form a wise plan evinces his wisdom, but he who not only makes a wise plan but puts it into execution shows yet more clearly his wisdom. God has made known His wisdom and power not only in the plan of creation but in the wonderful skill with which He hath put that plan into execution. The wisest philosopher and the mightiest king on earth could not, with their combined wisdom and wealth and power, make a single plant or flower, but our God has created the heavens and the earth and has filled them with thousands of stars and millions of trees and shrubs and flowers. Nothing but infinite wisdom and power could have built the universe, created its countless inhabitants and provided for their wants.

Let us learn, next, a lesson of the infinite goodness of God. This goodness manifests itself in constitutions with which He has endowed His creatures and the provision He has made for their wants. As the Psalmist meditated upon this subject he said, "He openeth His hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing. He giveth them their meat in season," and Christ taught that the heavenly Father "notes the fall of the sparrow and heareth the young ravens when they cry." Of man it is said that He careth for him and invites him to cast his burden on Him and promises to sustain him and He pledges to guide him even unto death and afterward to receive him into glory. The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. "Like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."

Let us learn also a lesson of dependence on God. If He gave us life and all of its blessings He can withdraw these at any time. We are indebted to Him for life and health and home and kindred and friends and neighbors and for all of the blessings of this life and for all of the hopes of the life to come. Let us never forget, then, that we are creatures of His hand, dependent upon Him for life and for every blessing of life. Let us learn a lesson of gratitude. If He has given us being and surrounded us with so many blessings it is our duty to feel and express our gratitude to Him, the author of all good. His goodness should call forth our love and bind us to Him

in loyal, loving service. We should say with David, " What shall I render unto the Lord for all of His benefits to me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord." Let us give Him the gratitude of our hearts, the praise of our lips and the service of our lives.

CHAPTER VII

ANGELS

There are many reasons why we should feel a deep interest in angels.

They were created by the same God who made us; they were present and rejoiced when man was created; they announced the birth of our Savior and they are made glad by the repentance of each sinner. Some of them, like ourselves, have fallen under the influence of sin and some of them have been confirmed in holiness, as some of us hope to be. Good angels are the messengers of God, sent forth to seek the salvation of men; while bad angels are messengers of Satan, sent forth to seek the ruin of men. At the last holy angels will come to conduct the redeemed to the world of light and then join with them in the worship and service of the Lord God who made them both. Sinful angels will then come to lead the lost down to the realms of darkness and then join with them in their suffering and cursing and anguish. Our weal and woe are so involved in that of the angels that we should desire to know all we can of them.

Who, then, are the angels? What their nature? their number? their classes? their employments and their destiny?

The word from which the term angel comes means a messenger, whether from God or man, whether human or spiritual. In this study it stands for a spiritual messenger from the other world. As there were Sadducees of old who denied the existence of angels so, in modern times, there are rationalists who tell us there are no angels. But both reason and revelation teach us to believe that there are spiritual beings in a grade higher than man. Below man we find a gradation of living beings extending from man down to the very lowest form of life. So we might, reasonably, expect to find rising above man a series of living creatures, reaching up to God, the supreme Being, the Creator and Maker of all things. The Bible is clear in its teaching concerning a class of beings above man and yet below God. These are spiritual, immaterial beings whom He calls angels because He uses them as His messengers in the revelation of His will and in the execution of His purposes. It was with reference to these that He spake when He said, " Thou madest him a little lower than the angels," and " unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." Among these angels there seem to be grades or orders, as indicated in the expressions, " thrones, dominions, principalities and powers." We read also of cherubim, seraphim and of angels and the arch-angel, " the chief of the princes of the angels." We are not told the ground nor the nature of these distinctions of the

one class from the other, but the use of such terms plainly indicates that there is a gradation in rank among the angels. We are taught, however, that whatever be the rank of angelic beings, however high or low, they were all created by the same Almighty power. "For by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth," (Colossians 1:16) and, "All things were made by Him and without Him was not any thing made that was made." (John 1:13.) And because they were created and owe their love and adoration to their infinite King and Creator, "when He bringeth His first begotten into the world He saith, Let all of the angels of God worship Him."

As to when the angels were created we are not informed except that, since they are represented as being present and rejoicing at the creation of man, they must have been created some time before man.

Angels are spiritual beings, having no material bodies, but being pure spirits like God, the supreme Spirit, according to the Scripture, "Who maketh His angels spirits." (Hebrews 1:7.)

They are real persons. All of the traits of personality are ascribed to them. They are sent, they come, they go, they speak, they desire, they know, they love, they rejoice, they worship, they adore and they serve.

They are intelligent. They must be intelligent in order to deliver His messages and execute His will when sent to instruct, guide, protect and de-

liver His people from the malice of their enemies. The woman of Tokoa gave expression to the Hebrew view of the superior knowledge of angels when she said, "My lord is wise according to the wisdom of an angel, knowing all things that are on earth." While their knowledge can never equal that of God, they are doubtless far more intelligent than the wisest of men. They are more highly endowed; they are holy so that their minds are unclouded by sin; they dwell with God and can constantly learn from Him lessons of knowledge and wisdom. They have long enjoyed these privileges so that their accumulated store of learning must be far superior to that of man. As compared with angels, the wisest man is but a child in understanding. They possess great power and are exceedingly quick and active in their movements. They pass from place to place with the rapidity of light. When Daniel was praying at eventide God commanded His angel Gabriel to go down and speak to him. The angel went from heaven to Daniel and touched and spake to him while he was still at his evening devotions. In one night the angel of God destroyed 185,000 of the hosts of Assyrians. By the strength of an angel the stone was rolled from the Savior's tomb and by an angel Peter was delivered from prison. Hence they are called "mighty angels" and are said to excel in strength. (Matthew 6:53; Psalms 103:20.)

They are holy. As they came from the hand

of God they must have been perfectly holy because He, their Maker, is holy. Hence they are expressly called holy and the manner in which they obey the holy will of God in heaven is held up to us as an example and we are taught by the Savior to pray that God's "will may be done on earth as it is in heaven." And angels are represented as saying in humble, adoring worship, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts; the whole earth is full of thy glory."

They are immortal, for our immortality is set forth by comparison with theirs when the Savior says, "Neither can they die any more for they are like to the angels." (Luke 20:30.)

They are happy. This follows from the fact that they are holy, for only sin can cause sorrow. They have nothing to regret for the past and nothing to fear for the future. They dwell in an abode of happiness. They enjoy the favor of God and have the high privilege of His worship and service.

The number of the angels is great beyond human enumeration. The Psalmist (68:17) speaks of "thousands of angels." A "multitude" of the heavenly hosts appeared to the shepherds when the Savior was born. Christ asserted His power to summon "twelve legions" of angels to His assistance when in danger at the hands of His enemies. John, in the isle of Patmos, heard the voices of "many angels, even ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands," and

the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews writes of "an innumerable company of angels." (Hebrews 12:22.) Milton seems, therefore, to have good ground for saying:

> "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
> Unseen, both while we wake and while we sleep."

As to the employment of good angels, we are taught that they worship and serve God. They sing His praise before His throne in heaven and they are sent forth on missions of love and mercy and of wrath and justice, according to the will of their sovereign Lord and King. They are a "flame of fire" to the enemies of God but "ministers of salvation" to them who would come back to God and know and enjoy His presence and favor.

They reveal the will of God. The law was given "under the ministration of angels," the Savior's birth was announced by an angel and the revelation which was given to John in Patmos was "sent and signified to him by His angel."

They suggest good thoughts and feelings to the people of God. The wicked angels are represented as "working in the minds of the children of disobedience"; so also may the good angels suggest that which is noble and good and pure to the minds and hearts of the children of obedience.

They protect and defend the children of God. "He shall give His angels charge over thee," and "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about

them that fear Him." (Psalms 91: 10 and 34: 7.)

They guide, comfort and strengthen believers. The angel guided the Church in the wilderness, strengthened Jesus in the garden, stood by Paul in the storm at sea and comforted the hearts of the women at the sepulcher. So now do they minister to those who are heirs of salvation. If the Church, and Jesus and Paul and the women of Christ's day needed and received the guiding, strengthening and encouraging ministrations of these heavenly messengers, God's children of this day need and may expect to receive their help as they journey from earth to heaven. As they bore the spirit of Lazarus to the mansions of rest in heaven, so will they conduct " the spirits of just men made perfect in holiness " to their home in heaven.

While all angels were originally holy and good, yet certain of them, having been left to the freedom of their own wills, fell into sin. They banded together against the God of heaven and thus lost their holiness and their abode in the holy and happy home in heaven and were thrust out into the outer darkness to pay the penalty of their sin. There they are said to be " reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment." (II Peter 2: 4.)

How a holy angel, with no outside tempter, could fall into sin no man can know, but of the fact there can be no doubt to the reverent student of the Word of God. We are expressly told that some of them " kept not their first estate." (Jude

5-6.) That estate was one of holiness and when they left that they entered into one of sin and misery. "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

What the particular sin was into which the angels first fell we do not know unless we have a hint as to its nature in that passage in I Timothy 3:6, in which it is written, "Not a novice lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Some have concluded from this that pride was what led to the condemnation of the devil. That he was lifted up with pride because of his greatness and glory, his exalted rank and position of prominence among his fellow angels. That dwelling upon this and thinking of his eminence, his knowledge and his power, he became vain in his estimate of himself and ceased to be sufficiently humble in the sight of God who made him and so dared to oppose his Maker. However this may be, we know, upon the testimony of God, that he and many of his companions sinned against God and lost their holiness and their home in heaven.

They were still creatures of God's hand but they had lost His image. They were still spiritual beings but had ceased to be holy spirits. They still possessed great intelligence and strength but they no longer used these in the service of God but of Satan, their chief and leader.

They were still immortal, but theirs was now an immortality of sinfulness and of misery and not one of holiness and happiness. The great, radical change wrought by their fall was in their moral natures. From being holy they became unholy. From being loyal and loving subjects of Jehovah they became traitors against His cause and rebels against His authority. From having the guidance and blessing of His Spirit they became destitute of His presence and blessing. Instead of continuing in the service of God their King they now enlisted in the service of the wicked angel who had led them astray. Thenceforth they became members of the kingdom of darkness and did everything in their power against the kingdom of light.

Not only did they manifest their enmity against God and His kingdom, but they began an incessant war against man. Their leader deceived Eve and drew Adam away from his loyalty to God and sought to lead the whole race down to the regions of the lost. He still "goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." His demons are equally active in their efforts to work the ruin of man. Such is their activity and power that the inspired writer says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephesians 6:1.) Bad angels, under the name of Satan and his demons, have power

to injure the body. The devil destroyed Job's property and afflicted his body with a loathsome disease. Demons entered the bodies of men, in the Savior's time, and usurped authority over both body and mind. So might they do today if God should permit.

But the greatest evil Satan and his allies can do to man is to tempt him to sin. He knows that "when sin is finished it bringeth forth death," and hence he seeks to lead men into sin that he may secure their spiritual and everlasting death. He is a murderer and nothing short of the death of his victim will satisfy him. He tempted Eve. He tempted Job and David and Solomon. He tempted Jesus Himself. He tempted Peter to deny his Lord and sought to have him that he might destroy him, but the Savior prayed for him that his faith might not fail. If he tempted all of these he will tempt you and me. If he sought their ruin he will seek ours. The destiny of the angels who remained faithful to God is everlasting life, for God expressly teaches that they shall "die no more." They have been confirmed in holiness and shall be kept by the power of God forever and ever. The evil angels for their wilful and daring sins have been assigned their place in "the everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

How grateful should we be for the ministration of good angels! They protect us in danger, strengthen us in weakness, guard us in tempta-

tion, comfort us in sorrow, support us in death and welcome us to heaven.

How we should be on our guard against evil angels! They may injure our bodies, derange our minds and ruin our souls. They may tempt us to sin and lead us down to death.

Let us seek the help and protection of Him who hath vanquished Satan and all of his hosts and pledged and promised us victory over all of our spiritual foes.

CHAPTER VIII

PROVIDENCE

The care and control which God exercises over the universe is called His providence. The word, providence, is from a root that means to see before, then to know before and thence to provide beforehand. Thus we speak of a provident man — a man who sees before what is needed and secures it. So God, in an infinite and perfect manner, sees beforehand and provides that which is necessary for the execution of all of His holy will. Providence indeed is but the unfolding and outworking in time of His eternal purpose and plan. It includes both the preservation and the government of all that He hath created. Granted His power to create all things, it follows as a matter of course that He is able to preserve and control every creature of His hand. Still, as His providence has been denied by some and not so fully recognized as it should be by others, it will be well to review some of the evidences of that providence over our world.

His perfections are such as to qualify Him for keeping and directing everything which He hath made.

His infinite knowledge enables Him to understand the nature and know the wants of every creature from the smallest to the greatest. His infinite power and resources are such as to enable Him to uphold all things and to meet and supply the want of each and every living thing which He hath made. His boundless wisdom qualifies Him to make the best possible use of that which His knowledge reveals and that which His power supplies. No emergency can possibly arise for which His wisdom and power are not equal. He can and will do all of His holy will concerning each and every created being. Then His goodness will prompt Him to bestow well-being and happiness upon all of His creatures so far as He can do so without disregard to His other glorious attributes, and His justice will insure a righteous and holy rule over all who are subject to His authority.

How unreasonable to suppose that such a being would exert His powers to bring into existence a countless throng of living beings and then forsake them and cease to preserve and govern them! It would be to forsake the work of His own hands. It would be for a father to cease to care for his own children.

The helplessness of all created things is such as to demand and require the sustaining power of some great and good being such as the God revealed to us in nature and in the Bible. If God did not, by His mighty power and wisdom, sustain

and direct the movement of the heavenly bodies endless confusion and certain destruction would be the inevitable result. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth forth His handiwork."

If God did not send the early and the latter rain upon the earth, all vegetation would wither and die and men and beasts would die for lack of food. "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that He may bring forth food out of the earth. These all wait upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season." (Psalms 104:14, 27.) "He openeth His hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing." (Psalms 145:16.) Man, though created superior to all earthly beings, is still dependent upon God his Maker. How ignorant of his own highest good is the wisest man! Even Solomon confessed that he was but as a little child and prayed to God for wisdom and guidance.

How weak is man in the face of the enemies which surround him! He cannot keep himself alive nor can he walk in the way that leadeth unto eternal life except as aided and guided by divine wisdom and power. Then, too, he is guilty and condemned under a just and holy law and cannot keep that law nor pay the penalty due to sin without giving up all hope of heaven. He is lost and cannot save himself. He needs God to keep and guide and save him. Now if, on the one hand, God be able to keep and govern all His creatures,

and they all need such preservation and control, what more natural than that God should extend such help to them?

The beautiful order which we observe in nature is an evidence of an overruling providence. The student of nature not only traces evidences of design in the original constitution of the heavens and the earth but also in their continued existence. The regular rotation of the earth upon its axis, giving us day and night; the revolution of the earth around the sun, giving us the change of seasons; the return of seed time and harvest; the production of seed after his kind; the preservation of the proper proportion of the sexes; the preservation and increase of the race and the spread of mankind over the earth — these and many other facts are clear evidences of the presence and power of God in the government of the world and its inhabitants. If it be said that all these things are the result of law, the answer is that these very laws are the best evidences of the Lawgiver. They are just His regular ways of doing things. Back of these laws and over these events standeth God, preserving and governing all creatures in all of their ways.

The moral nature of man demands such a providence. Men always and everywhere have such a sense of the presence of God and of their accountability to Him that they show plainly that they hold and believe that God is not afar off, but that He is near them, that He is their Ruler and their

Judge and that to Him they must at last render an account of all of the deeds done in the body. Their consciences accuse them or excuse them, according as they do or fail to do that which is right. If they will but listen to the voice of conscience they may hear the voice of God speaking to them of right and wrong, of justice and retribution. Their fears, their prayers, their sacrifices and their offerings all show that they have a sense of the presence and authority of God over their lives and conduct. How is this to be accounted for except upon the superstition that God hath revealed the fact of His rule to them and that He actually exercises over them such a providence as His character and their needs would lead us to expect?

If there should remain any doubt as to the providence of God over all things, that doubt will be dissipated by the Word of God from the minds of all those who receive this Word as a revelation from God. Listen to the emphatic language of the prophet Daniel (4:35), "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?" Read the words of the 139th Psalm, 1-10: "O Lord thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandeth my thought afar off. Thou compasseth my path and my lying down and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a

word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? for whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea: Even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me." Listen to Paul as he says, "In Him we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28.) Hear the Savior Himself teach that not a sparrow falleth to the ground without the knowledge of His Father and that the very hairs of our heads are all numbered. Reflect how we are taught that the most uncertain things of this world are within the knowledge and under the control of God, as: The dice when the lot is cast, for it is written, "The lot is cast in the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Proverbs 16:33); the way of man, while left with perfect freedom to do as he pleases—"the steps of the good man are ordered by the Lord." (Psalms 37:23); the ways of wicked men are overruled for the glory of God and for the welfare of His cause, as in the case of the brethren of Joseph when they sold him into bondage, intending it for evil, but God overruled it for good; and in the case of Judas when he sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, intending

it for evil, but God brought out of it the greatest good, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken and with wicked hands have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised from the dead" (Acts 2:23) and "Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a savior, for to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31.)

The properties of that providence which God exercises over the world correspond to the attributes of His own perfect nature.

It is perfectly holy. As God is holy so must be all of the outworkings of His holy plan. Though He permits He does not endorse the evil acts of man, nor is He in any sense responsible for them. He made man upright and surrounded him with the most favorable circumstances and then left him to the freedom of his own will. It is man who hath sought out many inventions. It is man who hath turned his back on God his Maker and gone off into the ways of sin and death. It is man who hath made alliance with sin and with Satan. God expressly disclaims all responsibility for man's sin and man is conscious of the fact that when he sins he does so of his own accord, freely and without any constraint or compulsion from God. Hence it is written: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil neither tempteth He any man; But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and en-

ticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." (James 1: 13-15.)

This providence is a wise exercise of power and holiness, justice, goodness and mercy. This wisdom is shown in nature by the wonderful provision for the wants of all creatures. The necessities of every creature, from the smallest insect to the largest animal, from the dumb brute to the being created in the image of God, are all provided for with unstinted bounty. God opens His hand and supplieth the wants of every living thing. It is shown in the history of the rise and fall of nations and peoples. All those nations which set themselves in opposition to the kingdom of Christ have been broken and brought to desolation in the past and such must be the fate of all who oppose the reign of King Immanuel in the future.

It is shown in the preservation of the Jewish people and in the spread of Christianity. It is shown in the plan of redeeming love and in the manner in which men are called into the kingdom of God.

This providence is not only wise and holy but it is powerful. Witness that power as it was displayed in the deliverance of the children of Israel from the land of bondage, in their passage through the sea, in their being fed in the wilderness and in their being brought at last into the land of promise.

Witness that power as it was displayed in the

rise and spread of Christianity in the early ages when the combined forces of the world sought to stamp it out, when through ten bloody persecutions the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church, and when they that were scattered abroad by persecution went everywhere preaching the gospel.

Witness that power as displayed in the Reformation of the sixteenth century when under the preaching of a few men such a great revolution was brought about both in church and state.

Witness that power as revealed in the marvelous success of modern missions among the nations of the earth. And witness that power in the gospel wherever it is preached and received and see how it becomes " the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth."

It is universal in its sway. It is His most holy, wise and powerful preserving and governing all of His creatures in all of their ways. It is not only a general but a special providence which God exercises over His creatures. No creature, however small, gets beyond the providence of God. None, however great, is beyond His control. None, however good, ceases to need His help and none, however wicked, can escape His power. " Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalms 76:10.) As to the manner in which God exercises His providence over the world we know little. Of the fact there can be no doubt, but as to how that fact is

made real we cannot fully know. God expressly says, "What I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter." Of two things we may be perfectly certain. First, that God will exercise His providence in such a way as not to do violence to His own nature and attributes. He will not tarnish His holy name by becoming in the slightest degree responsible for man's sin. He will not act unwisely. He will show no sign of weakness. He will do no injustice. He will exempt none from the sway of His power. He will in all things and at all times be true to Himself.

Next, He will exercise His providence in such a way as not to violate the nature of the creature. He will deal with the material world in accordance with the laws with which He endowed that part of His creation. He will deal with the animal kingdom in perfect harmony with the laws which He hath ordained for the members of that kingdom and He will treat man in accordance with the laws which He hath imbedded in His very nature. He will never forget that man has a mind to receive the truth, a heart to love the good and a will to regulate his conduct, a conscience to respond to the call of duty and a soul free from all external compulsion. God will never violate the nature of man, though He may enlighten his mind, renew his heart, strengthen his will, awaken his conscience and change the dispositions of his soul. In doing so God will not only not destroy the free agency of man, but will the rather establish it by deliver-

ing him from the blindness and hardness of sin and by releasing his soul from bondage to sin and Satan and translating man into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God. To restore to man's soul the divine likeness and to beget within his soul right and holy dispositions and thus insure right choosing and holy living, so far from taking away from man anything of his original nature, is but the restoring to man that which he has lost through yielding to sin and to the suggestions of Satan.

There are many important lessons to be learned from the study of God's providence. It will remind us of our dependence upon God. If He sustains us in life each moment we live; if we live just as long and no longer than He decides; if we must look to Him for all of our blessings, if we are accountable unto Him for all of our actions and indebted to Him for all of our mercies, then how great is God and how weak and dependent are we!

How secure are we if God be our God to watch over, guide, guard and protect us. "If God be for us who can be against us?" We shall be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last day."

How sure and certain the ultimate triumph of the cause of right! Though the wrong may seem to hold sway for a time, and though many fall in the contest for the supremacy of the right, let all who put their trust in God rest assured that at last

the victory shall be to the cause of righteousness because it is the cause of God. He will overturn and overturn till He whose right it is to reign shall reign King of kings and Lord of lords. Let us hear His voice speaking unto us and saying, "Be of good courage, I have overcome the world." "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

CHAPTER IX

SIN

Dr. Plumer once said, " Tell me what you think of sin and I will tell you what you think of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Law, the Gospel and of every necessary truth of religion."

Our view of sin will certainly influence and determine our view of the holiness of God, the majesty of His law and the value of His salvation. If we have low and unscriptural views of sin we will have correspondingly low and imperfect views of the character of God, the perfection of the law and the necessity of redemption. He who thinks lightly of his sin will treat the Savior and His salvation lightly. " He who sees no sin in himself will feel no need of a Savior." On the other hand if we have correct and scriptural ideas of sin we are likely to have correct ideas as to God, His law and its penalty and of pardon and deliverance from sin through the provision of the Gospel. There are not wanting evidences that in our day many have no adequate idea of the nature and evil of sin. The plain and explicit command of God is set aside in the interest of recreation and business. The day of God is spent in worldly amusements

and employments. His worship is neglected, his name profaned and his law violated. There is an absence of that deep contribution for sin which characterized those who sought an interest in salvation in former days. There was a time when men, under conviction for sin, gave signs of the deepest distress. They wept and prayed and confessed and cried mightily unto God for pardon. That day has to a great extent passed away. Many now come into the Church with scarcely a sign of sorrow for sin. In rationalistic circles and among some who claim to worship God there is a disposition to discard altogether the thought that we inherit guilt and a sinful nature from Adam. Then there is a lack of that humbling and abiding sense of sin that once constituted a feature of the experience of those who sought to walk in the footsteps of Him who was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." Some Christians, overlooking the true nature of sin as that which colors and influences the thoughts, the desires and motives of the soul, claim that they are no longer sinful in the sight of the pure and holy God of heaven.

How very important, therefore, to turn to the Word of God and learn afresh the true nature and influence of sin. There we learn that "by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." What, then, is the true nature of sin? The Hebrew word for sin denotes a missing of the

mark. The figure is taken from the practice of shooting at a mark. Instead of striking the centre the arrow goes to the right or left, above or below. It misses the mark. God has placed before man a high ideal of right and of destiny, but he misses that ideal by sinning against God. The Greek word which best describes sin is made up of two parts, alpha privative, which placed before a word changes it so as to express a negative instead of a positive meaning. It is placed before the word for law and in this combination the word means not according to law — unlawful, lawlessness — everything not in harmony with the law is sin. This thought is carried out in the definition with which some of you are familiar: "Sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God." The want of conformity is "not being or doing what God requires." Transgression is doing what God forbids. Sin is all disconformity or nonconformity to the law of God. It includes all sins of omission as well as all acts of transgression. It embraces all wrong thoughts and feelings and desires as well as all wrong words and deeds. It includes the states of the heart and dispositions of the soul not according to the law of God as well as all of those outward actions not in harmony with that perfect standard of right. It includes the loss of the image of God in which man was originally created. As he came from the hand of God man reflected the divine image in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness. By

sin that image was lost, so that the mind became darkened, the righteousness perverted and the holiness lost. Nor is this all, for there was not only loss of original righteousness but the corruption of the whole nature. We are born not only destitute of the image of God, but in the image of sinful man. As a tiger begets a tiger and a wolf a wolf, so a sinner begets a son in his own sinful likeness. The deformity of sin extends to every power and faculty of the soul. The mind is darkened, the heart is depraved and the will perverted. Then, too, there is the guilt of sin resting upon us from our birth, by which we are under obligation to be punished. We are " by nature children of wrath even as others." We come unto the world not only sinful but condemned.

Then from the evil within there flows out in our daily lives all of the acutal transgressions of which we become guilty. The bitter fountain sends forth bitter water. The bad tree bears evil fruit. Sin then includes the loss of God's holy image, the inheritance of a sinful nature, the guilt of sin and all of the actual transgressions of our lives. Hence the heart of man is said to be " deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." When Job got a vision of the holy God and then turned his gaze upon his own sinful heart he said, " I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." When David searched his heart and reviewed his life he said, " Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me," and prayed to God, " Cre-

ate in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Thus must we all feel and pray when we examine ourselves in the light of the Word and Spirit of God. Every man must say, "I have sinned," and everyone should pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Such is the lost, the helpless and the sinful condition of man — his ruin total and complete. By this we do not mean that man is as bad as he might be, because he is growing worse and worse every day. Nor do we mean that all men are equally bad because everyone can perceive degrees of sin in different men and the Bible teaches us that workers of iniquity "wax worse and worse." What we mean is that sin, in all men who have not been brought under the influence of grace, extends to the entire being and alienates the affections entirely from God, so that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7.) As the deadly loathsome, incurable leprosy taints the blood, and pervades and defiles every part and member of the body, so does sin affect and deprave every part of the soul of man. A small portion of poison thrown into a vessel of water poisons all of the water, though poison can be added till the entire body of water be poisoned to a greater degree. So sin in the soul of man reaches and affects every faculty of the mind and every disposition of the heart and every movement of the will but as sin increases the darkness of the mind be-

comes more dense, the hardness of the heart more obdurate and the perversion of the will more complete. Man is represented as blind, in bondage, helpless, and as dead in trespasses and sins. God alone can raise him up, God alone can give the help that is needed. He alone can break the fetters of sin and He alone can open the blind eyes. Man, apart from God, is lost in sin totally, completely, entirely lost. "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death."

We are taught that it was through one man that sin entered into the world. That man was Adam, who stood as our natural and federal head and represented our interests with God. To him was given a splendid opportunity to secure for himself and for all of his posterity a glorious and happy inheritance. He was a mature man with all the faculties necessary to constitute him a free, intelligent, moral and responsible agent — with power to obey or disobey the wise and holy commands of God his Father. He was placed in a holy and happy home, blessed with a holy companion, and surrounded with an abundance of all that could please the eye, gratify the taste and engage the thoughts of his mind, the affections of his heart and the energies of his will. Only one slight prohibition was placed upon him to test his love and loyalty. "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die!" He was fully informed of the responsibility resting upon

him and of the consequences of both obedience and disobedience. He was taught that whatever moral and legal status he should secure for himself he would secure for all of his posterity. If he obeyed he would be confirmed in holiness and innocence forever, and each and every one of his descendants would share with him all of the blessings and benefits of such confirmation. Like him they would be kept holy and happy to all eternity. Like him they would be permitted to dwell in the presence of God and so be secure against all of their enemies. By a short period of loving, loyal obedience he could secure for himself and for them a title to eternal life with all of its privileges and blessings.

If he disobeyed he was to become guilty and depraved, sinful and condemned — and so would all they who were to descend from him. By one short, sinful act of disobedience he would bring upon himself and upon all of his descendants all of the evils included in the term death. " In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die " was God's word of warning to Adam. " Ye shall not surely die " was the word of Satan.

Eve, who had listened to the word of the tempter, gave to Adam of the fruit and, not deceived, but recreant to the high trust of his own and a race's eternal welfare he did eat of the forbidden fruit. In doing so he distrusted, disobeyed and dishonored God and thus brought himself and all mankind into an estate of sin and misery. He became guilty and sinful and so all of his children became

guilty and sinful. Thus "by one man sin entered into the world and death passed upon all men." He stood as the head and representative of all mankind. He represented their cause. He held in his keeping their destiny. Just as they would all have been partakers of the blessings of eternal life had he maintained his innocence and loyalty, so now that he failed they became heirs of all the miseries of spiritual and eternal death. All men are involved in the ruin wrought by one man. They all inherit his nature and so share his guilt and condemnation. He begat sons and daughters in his own image and hence they all receive and suffer the penalty due to his sin and to theirs. Turning to the Word of God we find the most explicit teaching as to the universal inheritance of sin on the part of all the sons and daughters of Adam. In I Kings 8:46, "There is no man that sinneth not." Psalms 143:2, "There is not a just man on the earth." I John, 1:8. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves." I John 5:19. "The whole world lieth in iniquity." Romans, 2:23, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." All persons, Jews, Gentiles — all ages, young and old — always and everywhere men sin and men die.

The evil of sin may be measured by the dignity of the God against whom it is committed, by the ruin it brings upon man, by the evil it communicates to others and by the punishment God inflicts upon those who commit it and upon Him who un-

dertook to pay its penalty in the sinner's stead. This penalty is here said to be death. "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." "The wages of sin is death." "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." Death is one of those comprehensive words that include several important elements. It means the loss of the grace of God from the soul, by which alone it is preserved in harmony with God. So long as that grace was there there was spiritual life and communion with God. They were at one in their views and purposes. They walked and talked together, face to face, as man talks to his friend. But when grace was displaced by sin the soul lost its spiritual life. When grace was thrown out and sin was let in there entered sorrow and remorse. Discord reigned where once harmony had dwelt.

Man became alienated from God, the source of life and light. It was in this sense that man suffered death, according to the threat of God in the day that he ate of the forbidden fruit. He ceased from that time to enjoy the presence and favor of God and became the object of His displeasure. Though God still pitied him and loved him with the love of compassion, He was bound by His holy nature to regard and treat him as a condemned sinner. He pronounced a curse upon him and drove him forth from the happy home in which He had placed him. Thus deprived of the grace of God and no longer enjoying His presence and help

and favor, man sank down into spiritual insensibility — he became dead in trespasses and sins. As a corpse is insensible of the light that shines upon it, so man in sin did not receive and use the spiritual light that shone upon him from heaven. "The light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not." As the dead man cares not for the feast that is spread out before him, so the sinner has no taste for the gospel feast spread out before him. Though the invitation goes forth, "Come, for all things are now ready," they "all with one consent began to make excuse." As the dead man has no power to raise himself up from physical death, so the sinner has no power to quicken himself into spiritual life.

Another element of the penalty was a separation of the soul from the body, or physical death, including all of the suffering, pain and disease leading to and terminating in death of the body. All pain and sickness and sighing and death come from sin. Still another element of this death penalty is the separation of the sinner from the presence and favor of God forever. Though God has provided a means by which death can be conquered and man may be restored to spiritual and eternal life, many persistently reject this provision and so pass out into eternal death — the final separation from the presence and favor of God. This element will only be known when the final word of the Judge is spoken, "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Then " these shall go away into the outer darkness where there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." Then shall be suffered the second death — the eternal death — threatened against sin. What are to be all of the elements and degrees of this suffering no man can fully know, any more than he can know all of the degrees of joy and happiness which shall be enjoyed by the heirs of everlasting life when they shall be welcomed into heaven. There will be the loss of holiness and happiness, the loss of heaven and eternal life. There will be remorse for unimproved opportunities and unaccepted offers of mercy. There will be separation from friends and kindred and from all that is high and holy and good. There will be the removal of all restraints of virtue and home and law and gospel. There will be the presence of all that is sinful and evil and depraving. There will be the company of the lost of men and of the devil and his angels. There will be the taunts and jeers and scoffs and curses of condemned men and angels. There will be the infliction of all the positive pains and penalties included in the curse described as the second death. Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death — sin that might have been avoided — that might have been escaped — that separates from God and heaven and happiness and that shuts up in hell the lost with the Devil and all of his demons forever and forever. I beseech you to turn away from the sin that leads to such a doom and flee for refuge to

lay hold upon the hope set before you in the gospel. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him and unto our God for He will abundantly pardon."

CHAPTER X

THE LAW

Since we owe to God love and obedience we may reasonably expect from Him a law to direct us in our efforts to serve Him. That law He has given in the Ten Commandments. These lay down the great fundamental principles by which our lives are to be regulated. They set forth the general duties which we owe to God and man. The Savior summed up the whole law in love to God and man. The duties which we owe to God are taught in the Commandments of the first table, and the duties which we owe to man are set forth in the Commandments of the second table. In order to ascertain the true meaning of the several precepts of the decalogue *certain rules* have been agreed upon by the best interpreters of the law. The first of these rules is that:

1. It is to be borne in mind that *the law is spiritual*, applying not only to the outward conduct of the life, but to the thoughts of the mind and the desires of the heart. Paul alludes to this rule of interpretation when he says "We know that the law is *spiritual*." "I had not known lust, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.' (Ro-

mans 7:7, 14.) It was according to this principle that Christ taught that he who was angry with his brother without cause was guilty of murder and that the seventh commandment could be violated by the sinful desires of the heart as well as by overt acts.

2. A second rule of interpretation is that an *affirmative precept includes a negative and a negative includes an affirmative.* For example, the command which enjoins a good prohibits the opposite evil and the precept which forbids a given evil enjoins the contrary good. When God bids us honor our parents He thereby forbids our dishonoring them. When He says, " Thou shalt not kill," He teaches us to use all lawful means to preserve life.

3. In the precepts of the moral law *one sin of a given class stands for the entire class;* so that when one sin is forbidden, all similar sins are condemned. Thus when it is written, " Thou shalt not steal," all actions which tend to deprive others of that which of right belongs to them, are condemned as wrong. All cheating, defrauding and robbing, by whatever means accomplished, are forbidden by the one precept, " Thou shalt not steal."

4. The *cause must be regarded as included in the effect,* the genus in the species and the correlative in the relative. When stealing is forbidden, its *cause, covetousness,* is condemned. Under the prohibition of murder, cherished anger is included. Under taking the name of God in vain, all lack of

reverence of God, His name, His works, His Word and His worship, is included. When the duties of children are enjoined upon them, parents are taught to be worthy of the honor implied in the discharge of such duties to them.

5. Duties to God should take precedence of duties to man and moral precepts should outrank positive commands. "We ought to obey God rather than man," and "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." That is, though the sacrifice was enjoined by positive precept, it was not to interfere with the exercise of mercy.

By a careful and prayerful application of these rules we may arrive at a correct knowledge of the meaning of the law, and knowing its meaning we are bound to seek to regulate our actions according to its precepts.

1. *The first commandment* teaches us to *worship God alone.* We are to allow no other being or object to gain that place in our heart's affection which belongs of right to Him. We are to recognize in Him one worthy of our highest love and adoration. We must give to Him the first and best place in our hearts, and own and acknowledge Him to be our Lord and our God,— the being to whom we look for the supply of all of our wants and for protection from all evil. We are to see in Him the highest good and the supreme authority and to own Him as "our all-comprehending Good and our all-disposing Lord." To him we are to render thanksgiving and praise for all that He is

and for all that He hath done. To Him we must confess our sins, and from Him hope for pardon and acceptance through His Son. To Him we must look for guidance in perplexity, strength in weakness, pardon in guilt, salvation from sin and introduction into the blessings of holiness and the joys of Heaven. He is so wise and powerful and just and good that He is worthy of all of the affections of our hearts and all of the adoration of our souls. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve."

2. *The second commandment* teaches us to worship God *directly* and thus *to shun idolatry.* "God is a spirit and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth, for He seeketh such to worship Him." He saw that if men were permitted to worship Him through images, their minds would be turned away from Him and that they would gradually learn to worship the wood and stone idols to which they had been accustomed to bow with such reverence. His own chosen people often fell into this sin and many since their day have bowed before idols in worship rather than before the Lord God who made them. Hence the plain and positive command, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers

upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments."

3. *The third commandment teaches us how to worship God.* It teaches us to worship Him with *reverence* and Godly fear. It teaches us to reverence God's name, His word and His work. We must become so impressed with the holiness and majesty of God that we will not use lightly His name, nor treat with contempt His Word, nor profane His house, nor undervalue His works. His name stands for all that He is, and hence to take His name in vain is to dishonor His person. His Word is a revelation of His will and character. Hence to treat it with contempt is to ignore the majesty and glory of God. His works are the outward expressions of the thoughts of His mind. To treat these lightly is to refuse to consider seriously the beautiful expressions of supreme knowledge and wisdom. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

4. *The fourth commandment teaches us to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."* God richly deserves one seventh of our time as an acknowledgment of His gift to us of all time. And we need the Sabbath as a day of rest and meditation and worship and spiritual service. Unless we have a regular, stated time for the study of His Word, for the worship of His great and holy be-

ing and for seeking the spiritual welfare of ourselves and others we will be apt to neglect these duties altogether. The man who does not worship God in His sanctuary regularly on the Sabbath is in danger of ceasing to worship Him altogether. The man who does not cultivate his religious nature by setting apart the time of the Sabbath day for meditation, prayer, public worship and deeds of kindness and charity to his fellowmen, is in danger of allowing that part of his being to go uncultivated. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

5. Of all of the duties which we owe to man those which we owe to our fathers and mothers come first. Hence the next commandment is:

"*Honor thy father and thy mother* that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Our parents are God's representatives in the home. They receive us from God and have laid upon them the duty of training us for God and for the welfare of our fellowmen. The father is the prophet of God to teach the truth in His name. He is a priest, that he may lead the worship and devotion of his children before God. And he is the king that he may require at their hands all of that which God teaches in His Word. Just in proportion as parents recognize and fulfill the obligations that thus rest upon them to train their children for God, will it be the duty of the children to render unto them honor and obedience in the Lord. "Children obey your parents

in all things, for this is acceptable unto God." Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

6. *Next we are to regard and treat life as a sacred gift* from God. He gives to each man the precious boon and none but He, or His appointed agents, may take it away. It is the condition of all earthly enjoyment and the opportunity of service for God and man, and of preparation for the life to come. Hence you have no right to rob man of his life. You cannot restore it if you take it away, neither can you escape the curse which God hath pronounced against those who shed man's blood. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

7. *The seventh commandment is aimed against the violation of the marriage covenant.* This capital sin is selected as the representative of all lesser sins of the same kind. It is the worst of its class, because it undermines the foundation of the home, destroys all pure affection between the husband and wife, overwhelms the innocent party with a spirit of jealousy and revenge, and the guilty party with shame and despair. It robs the children of a true father or mother and brings upon all of the parties a bereavement worse than death. Along with this sin all kindred crimes are condemned and their opposite virtues commended. Our standards teach that "this commandment requireth the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, in

heart, speech and behavior," and " forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words and actions." They teach the little children " to be pure in heart, language, and conduct." The Savior authorized this interpretation, when He branded as violators of this command those who should be guilty of impure thoughts. Hear and obey the voice of God as He says, " Thou shalt not commit adultery."

8. *The eighth commandment* is intended to warn men against the attempt to *rob others of that which belongs to them*, and so to guard men in the possession of their property. It throws around one's possessions a wall of defence through which no one may break without incurring the displeasure of God as well as the anger of man. It teaches us to be honest and industrious. It requireth the promotion of our own and our neighbors' worthy prosperity and forbiddeth every thing that can or may hinder such prosperity. All plans and schemes for cheating, defrauding and robbing are condemned. All tricks of trade, such as defect in weights and measures, and all misrepresentation, extortion and deception are forbidden, and men are taught to do unto others as they would have others do unto them, under similar circumstances. This is a lesson which needs to be taught and learned in our day, when business men tell us that it is actually easier to make money than it is to keep it safely against the greed and dishonesty of the many who would take it from its lawful owners.

9. *The ninth commandment teaches us to tell the*

truth, and to guard with care our own good name and that of our neighbor. It binds upon us, as witnesses, to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It teaches us, in business and social life, to speak the truth in heart and word and action. It forbids whatever is false and everything that is prejudicial to the truth or injurious to our own good name or that of our neighbor.

10. *The tenth commandment is aimed against covetousness* and teaches us to be content with our lot and to maintain a right and charitable frame of mind toward our neighbor and all that is his. It forbids discontent, envy and grief at the good fortune of our neighbor, and all inordinate and unlawful desire to get by unfair means that which does not belong to us. It shows that God requires us to *refrain from sinful desires* as well as from sinful actions. " Thou shalt not covet." That is, thou shalt not want more than legally belongs to you, nor more than you can lawfully acquire. Just so, all of the commands of God lay hold upon the heart and conscience of man: and He teaches us in His Word that He " requireth truth in the inward parts " and that " love is the fulfilling of the law."

From his exposition of the law, it will be seen that, though the law can never be a means of salvation, it is *still in force and has many valuable uses*. It is a great mistake to suppose, as some

have held, that the coming of Christ abrogated the moral law or that it is of no further service. On the contrary He expressly taught that He came "not to destroy but to fulfill the law," and that "one jot or tittle should in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." As to the *uses* of the law:

It reveals the character of God. It makes known the view that God takes of the duties which man owes alike to Himself and to man, and thus teaches how just and holy and wise and good is the Author of the law.

It convinces of sin and thus leads us to look out of ourselves to Christ for salvation. Paul says he had not known sin but that the law had said, "Thou shalt not covet"; that he was alive without the law, but that when the law came, sin revived and he died. That is, he thought himself good and righteous until he examined the law, but that then he saw that he was sinful and lost. Thus the law became a school-master to lead him to Christ.

It serves as a means of sanctification by revealing the wrong and holding up the right. It is the very expression of God's truth but truth is the instrument which the Holy Spirit uses for man's growth in grace and holiness. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth," was the prayer of the Savior in behalf of His people. By the blessing of the Spirit upon the truth and upon

the heart of the believer, he " is enabled to die more and more unto sin and to live more and more unto righteousness."

The law will serve as a means of restraining the wicked from sin. When men read and hear the law and consider the penalties which will fall upon those who break its precepts, they will, to a large extent, be deterred from sin. Some may still defy the law, but many will stand in awe and seek to avoid overt acts of disobedience. The law is still the *rule by which the Christian man must regulate his life.*

Christ declared that it became Him to fulfill all righteousness, so should His followers feel that they should seek to keep every precept of the law so far as possible.

Then it is by the law that men are to be judged at the last day. The law as applied to the thoughts and feelings, the words and deeds of men, will reveal to them and to others the sins of which they have been guilty. When the books are opened and men are judged according to the things which are written in the books," the book of the law will be one of those books, and men will be made to see that their sins deserve whatever punishment the Judge of all of the earth shall decide ought to be inflicted, so that " Every mouth will be stopped and all of the world will become guilty before God." " Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Romans 3:19, 20.)

Only they who look to Christ and trust in Him alone for salvation may hope to stand pardoned and accepted before the bar of God at the judgment of the great day. Christ kept the law perfectly and paid its precepts fully so that all who are found in Him shall be openly owned and acquitted in that day of reckoning. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." (Acts 16:31.)

CHAPTER XI

GOD'S PLAN OF RESCUE

A wise man always has a plan and a purpose concerning any work he would do. The architect forms a plan of the house before he begins to build. The farmer has a plan before he plants his crop; and the general makes his plan of campaign before he begins the battle. So God, in whose image man was made, has a plan and purpose in all that He does. Sometimes man finds that his plan was not wise or that he is not able to carry out his plan and hence must change or give it up, but God's plans are always wise and He has power and resources such that He can always carry them out. His plan was so comprehensive that it embraced from eternity all that He proposed to do throughout all time. "Known unto God are all of His works from the beginning." (Acts 15:18.) "Our God is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He pleased." (Psalms 115:3.)

He had a plan concerning creation and carried it out so successfully that He pronounced it to be "very good," and all who investigate its constitution and nature discover countless evidences of wisdom and design.

He had a plan of the providence He would exercise over all His creatures, and He has carried out in the past and is still carrying out that plan without in any wise destroying their free agency and yet in such a way as to bring to pass with unerring certainty all of His wise and holy will, so that it may be written, "He doeth according to His pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." And, "in Him we live and move and have our beings."

As in creation and providence, so it is in redemption God hath a definite plan. He purposed, from all eternity, to save a great multitude which no man can number, to be gathered out of every nation and kindred and tribe and people. In covenant with His Son, He said, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And of His Son He wrote, "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied; and by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities." Concerning this covenant Christ said, "All that the Father hath given Me shall come to Me, and Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." To His people He will at last say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The work of calling, guiding and saving His people will all be His, so that they must all say, "Who hath saved us not according to our works,

but according to His own *purpose* and grace in Christ Jesus, before the world began." (Ephesians 1:4, 5.) The plan and purpose of salvation was present and formed in the divine Mind before the world began, but was not to be made known till needed by fallen man. According to this plan, God was to give His Son to remove all legal obstacles to man's salvation and the Holy Ghost to remove all moral and spiritual deficiencies. In a previous chapter we saw that Adam, as our natural and federal head, stood as our representative and was given to understand that whatever moral and legal status he might secure by his conduct for himself he would also secure for all those whom he represented. If for a time he continued holy and innocent, he and they would be confirmed in that condition and so secure the blessings of life eternal. But if he became sinful and guilty, so would they. The destiny of all of his posterity was linked with his. When God would recover man from his fallen condition, He sends Christ to secure for all those whom He represented the status which He was to maintain before God. As He was innocent, so should all whom He represented become by virtue of His life and death on their behalf; and as He was holy so, by His Spirit, should they become holy. As He was to gain the victory over death and Hell, so should they. As he was to enter into the heavenly inheritance, so should they. As He was heir of God, they, by union with Him, were to be heirs of

God and joint heirs with Him to the heavenly inheritance. It was in accordance with this plan that Paul could write concerning God's work for himself and others, " Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace in Christ Jesus before the world began."

In effecting this salvation, God was carrying out His purpose formed in Christ before the world began. God foresaw all that would come upon man through the sin of his first representative, and determined to prevent defeat by the appointment of a second representative who would be faithful to the trust committed to Him and secure the salvation of all who put their trust in Him. This salvation to be wrought out by Christ would provide for the adjustment of all the legal difficulties in the way and at the same time for the removal of all of the moral evils in the way of salvation through the work of the Spirit whom He would send forth to apply the redemption to man's heart.

With the outlines of this plan you are already familiar. You know how, " God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." You know what Christ did to rescue guilty and condemned sinners from the curse of the law and to bring them into a condition of pardon and acceptance with God. He was born under the law, and did and suffered in our stead all that God required of us. He rendered a per-

fect obedience and paid fully the penalty due to man's sin, and offered to him the benefit of His obedience and death. "He became obedient unto death even the death of the cross." He gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Hence it is written, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written 'cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.'" Christ not only saved His people from the condemnation due to them on account of their sins, but restored them to His love and favor. It is not only written, "There is, therefore, now no more condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," but also that "We are accepted in the beloved." All of the claims of truth, holiness and justice are so met that the man who accepts Christ as his Savior is welcomed back into the love and confidence of God the Father. Not only so, but the man who accepts Christ is brought into the family of God and made an heir of all the blessings of the household of faith. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." "We are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ."

If we become children of God through Christ, then we are sure of all of the privileges and blessing and honors which are to come to the children of God. The care of a tender Heavenly Father

shall be thrown around them, the love of God will rest upon them, all of their sins shall be pardoned and they shall be received into the number and have a right to all of the privileges of the children of God. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God." Thus by the work of Christ the legal difficulties are met and removed, and man is restored to the love and favor of God.

Then, too, God sends the Holy Spirit into the heart to call it away from sin and to enlighten it in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. "Beloved now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." "We all beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, shall be changed by the same Spirit into the same image." And at last "We shall be satisfied when we awake in His likeness." The power and dominion of sin shall be overcome, its pollution cleansed away and its very being at last removed from the soul. Thus by the work of Christ he is brought back into right relations to God and by the work of the Holy Spirit he is renewed in the image of God. God the Father drew the plan, Christ the Son wrought it out and the Holy Spirit applies the salvation in such a way as to restore to man's soul the image of His Heavenly Father. This salvation will be still further extended and brought to completion when by the almighty power of God the body of the believer shall be raised

from the dead, reunited to the soul freed from all sin, and welcomed into all of the blessings and privileges of eternal life in the kingdom of God in heaven.

We have now learned, as to this plan for recovering man from the ruin wrought by sin, that it is a plan "according to the *purpose* of God"; that this plan was determined upon from all eternity, to be executed in the fulness of time; that it was not according to our works that salvation was earned or bought, but that it was bestowed upon us through the free and sovereign grace of God; that it is a salvation in or through Christ Jesus — that is, through what He did and suffered to redeem us back to God; and that it was revealed and made manifest by the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light. This is the good news brought to us by the revelation of the love of God in Christ Jesus. This is God's plan of mercy and salvation for lost sinners. It is His method of restoring His lost children to His household.

Let us rejoice in the purpose of God's mercy to bestow upon us salvation through the gift of His Son to be our Redeemer. Had it not been for this provision, we must have gone down into the darkness of spiritual death without God and without hope. With a knowledge of this plan we may mount up to the light of spiritual life in "the presence of God where there is fulness of joy, and

to His right hand where there are pleasures forevermore." Let us seek to be conformed to the purpose of Him who hath called us to such a holy calling and to such a heavenly destiny. Let us "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." Let us "let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in Heaven." If we have never yet learned this plan and never accepted the Savior it reveals, let us at once seek this knowledge and own and acknowledge this Savior. Let us bow to His sceptre, acknowledge His right to our love and worship, and receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered to us in the gospel. Then will He save us by His grace and bring us at last to dwell with Him in glory.

CHAPTER XII

THE PERSON OF CHRIST — HIS HUMANITY AND DIVINITY

Christ is the centre of the Christian system, and He is the *Word* by which God reveals Himself to man. The *gospel* is the good news of what Christ has done for the salvation of lost sinners. He is the *foundation* on which rests the believer's hope of eternal life. He is the *light* to shine upon the way in which the sinner must walk in order to reach the celestial city. He is the *way* from earth to heaven. He is the *truth* to make us wise unto salvation, and He is the *life* by which we can escape spiritual and eternal death. He is the "*author* and the *finisher of our faith.*" He is the *prophet* to reveal to us the will of God for our salvation. He is the *priest* to make the sacrifice to atone for our sins, and He it is who is to pray in our behalf at the throne of God in heaven. He is the *king* who alone can subdue and conquer our spiritual enemies and give us the complete victory over them in the end. He is the *Son of* God, the *Son of* man and the *Savior of* sinners. He is both human and divine.

That He was human few have denied. All who

receive the Bible as an inspired revelation from God must admit that it repeatedly sets forth the humanity of Christ. He had a real human body and a true and reasonable human soul; and the human and the divine were united in the one person of Christ. He was born, He grew, He hungered, He thirsted, He grew weary, He ate, He slept and He was refreshed. He lived and walked and talked. He rejoiced and wept. He was persecuted, He suffered, sorrowed, was crucified, died and was buried. Thus we see that the New Testament is full of references to His humanity. He was very man, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and was "tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin." The Bible is equally clear in its teaching concerning His divinity. The passages on this subject have been gathered together under several classes. It will be sufficient to give only the stronger and plainer of these, leaving the others to be sought out by each individual.

There are passages which speak of Christ as being in existence long before He was born in Bethlehem. In this class belong all of those passages which speak of the appearance of "the angel of the covenant" to the patriarchs before the birth of Christ. Under the Old Testament dispensation there appeared to Hagar, to Abraham and to Jacob and to Moses a being called "the angel," "the angel of the covenant," who received

divine homage, was called by divine names and wrought divine works. To him Hagar prayed. He heard her prayer and promised to make of her descendants "a great nation." To Abraham he revealed himself as *Jehovah*, gave him commandment to sacrifice his son Isaac, and, when Abraham's faith failed not, prevented the sacrifice, saying, "Thou hast not withheld *from Me* thy son." (Genesis 22: 13.) And he called the name of the place "Jehovah-jireh," "Jehovah will provide." Now the prophets Isaiah and Malachi foretold that there would come a forerunner of this angel and that he would himself "come suddenly into the temple" to assert his power and authority. When John the Baptist came he claimed that he was that forerunner and so had fulfilled that part of the prophecy, and that Christ would soon come and fulfill the other part of it. This Christ did by entering His own temple and there asserting His authority and exerting His power. Jesus, then, was the angel of the covenant and under that form had appeared to the fathers to comfort and guide them and teach them the way of life. He existed and manifested Himself to Israel two thousand years before He was born in Bethlehem. This could be asserted of no mere man. But there are passages which carry His existence far back of the patriarchs. He Himself declared "Before Abraham was, I am." (John 8: 58.) The Jews had said to Him: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" "Wast

thou a contemporary with Abraham?" "Yea," said Christ, "before Abraham was, I am." "I was already in existence before Abraham's day, before Abraham was born." But stronger, if possible, than this is the passage in the first chapter of John, verses one and two: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." In the very beginning of creation, before anything was made, even then was Christ in existence, dwelling with His Father in the glory which He had with Him before the world was. This accords with the statement in the eighth chapter (verse 23) of Proverbs, "I was set up *from everlasting*, from the *beginning*, ere ever the earth was." Thus the Scriptures trace the existence of Christ back into eternity and lead us to think of Him as eternal and divine like His Father.

The next step is to see that the *names of God* are given to Christ. In the first chapter of the Gospel of John the "*Word*" plainly refers to Christ. A word spoken reveals the thought that before lay concealed in the mind. So Christ came forth to reveal the thought of God concerning our salvation, and hence is called the "Logos," the Word. Now of this Word it is said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Then, to put it beyond all doubt that reference was had to Christ, it is said in the same context, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His

glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (Verse 14.) "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." (Verse 18.) In the ninth chapter of Romans Paul uses this striking language: "And of whom" (referring to the Jewish nation) "Christ came, who is *God* over all, and blessed forever. Amen." (Verse 5.) This passage alone should put beyond all doubt the fact that the Bible calls Christ God in the highest and most exclusive sense. He is represented as expressly addressed as God. "Unto the Son He saith, 'Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.'" (Hebrews 1:8.) The apostle Thomas, who had ample opportunity to know Him and who was inspired to reveal His will, fell before Him saying: "My Lord and my God"; and so have all true disciples who have learned from the Word of God that Christ is represented as being coëternal with God the Father and as entitled to the same names that apply to Him.

Not only the names but the *attributes of God* are ascribed to Christ. Eternity is attributed to Him. He "was in the beginning with God" before anything was made, and He had enjoyed glory with the Father "before the world was." (John 1:2 and 17:5.) Of Him as a ruler the prophet says, "Thou, Bethlehem, Ephrata, . . . out of thee shall come forth unto me, *that* is to be a Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have

been ever of old, *from everlasting.*" (Micah 5:2.) And Christ says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

Omnipresence. He promised to be with His people wherever they assembled for prayer or for worship and to His ministers that He would be with them "alway unto the end of the ages." (Matthew 28:20.)

Omniscience. He claims to have a knowledge of God the Father as complete and perfect as the Father has of Him. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and He to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." (Matthew 11:27.) "He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man." (John 2:23.) He could read at a glance every secret of every heart — could see the sin there, the struggle, the desire, the temptation, the sorrow and the burden. This was necessary to qualify Him to be the Teacher and the Priest and Savior of men. He must know the needs of the soul before He can supply those needs. He must know the sickness before He can apply the remedy.

Immutability. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever." (Hebrews 12:8 and 1:10.)

Omnipotence. In the description given of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews we have this language: "Who, being the brightness of the

Father's glory and the express image of His person, and *upholding all things by the word of His power*, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Hebrews 1:3.) Christ claimed equal honor and power with the Father. He said, as He sent forth His disciples to the mighty task of preaching the gospel to all of the world, "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and earth." (Matthew 28:18.) He hath the keys of death and hell. He can open and no man can shut, and He can shut and no man can open. He is destined to reign till every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father. *Divine works* are ascribed to Christ. He is represented as creating all things. "All things were made by Him and without Him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:3.) "He was in the world and the world was made by Him." (John 1:10.) "For by Him were *all things* created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him and by Him all things consist." (Colossians 1:16-17.) No language could have been selected that would have expressed more clearly and more emphatically the thought that Christ made all things both in heaven and on earth. He not only created all things, but He "upholds all things by the word of His power," and "by Him

all things consist." He has the power to preserve and uphold that which He hath made. The wonderful miracles which He *wrought* were an evidence of His power. He could heal the sickness which no earthly physician could cure. He could speak the word and the leper was made clean and whole. He could open the blind eyes, unstop the deaf ears, give speech to the dumb and raise the dead. He had power not merely to save the body from the power of demons, disease and death, but to save the soul from guilt and sin and spiritual death. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life and I will raise him up at the last day." He had power over death and demons and the devil. He is at last to judge the quick and the dead and to cast the arch enemy of God and man, and all who ally themselves with him, into the prison house of the lost to be punished forever and ever.

Then, too, religious worship is to be given to the Son as well as to the Father. God warns men against idolatry and against the worship of men or angels: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve." But he expressly teaches both men and angels to worship His Son. "When He bringeth in the first begotten into the world, He saith, 'And let all the angels of God worship Him.'" (Hebrews 1:6.) Christ claimed this as His right: "The Father . . . hath committed all judgment unto the Son;

that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." (John 5:23-24.) The honor which is given the Father must be given by men to the Son. If they sing the praises of God the Father, they must sing the praises of the Son. If they bow before the throne to worship the Father, they must bow there to worship the Son also. If they pray to the Father, they must pray to the Son. If they love and trust and serve the Father, they must love and trust and serve the Son. His name is "above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:10, 11.)

The early Christians worshipped Christ. They became known as they who called upon His name. Stephen died the death of a martyr, "calling upon God and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'" God's people in all ages, and in all lands where the gospel has been preached, have always worshipped Christ in prayer and song, and the redeemed in Heaven are represented as saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to our God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign upon the earth." (Revelations 5:9.) Surely, then, there can be no doubt but that God intended that we should regard and treat

Christ as divine as well as human, and that we should give to Him the highest place in the thought of our minds, the affections of our hearts and the service of our lives. He should be to us "the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely."

In the light of this study it may be well said: "It is impossible to explain the life, character and works of Christ unless we accept the account of His nature and origin given to us in the Word of God." It requires the Christ of the gospel to explain the history which has taken place in the ages past. It requires the Christ of the gospel to satisfy the needs of the souls of men in the present; and it will require the Christ of the gospel to meet the demands of the hearts and lives of men in the future; and it will require the Christ revealed in the gospel to call forth the love and adoration, the worship and service of the redeemed throughout all eternity.

On what a sure and solid foundation is built the hope of the man who hath put his trust in Christ, the Rock of Ages! How safe the believer who hath committed his soul to the keeping of this divine Savior! "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution or famine or nakedness, or peril or sword? . . . Nay, in all of these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers,

nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:35-39.)

Have you trusted in this wise and mighty, tender and faithful Savior? If not, do so at once. His character deserves your trust and love, your worship and service. You need His guidance and help in life. You will need His supporting grace in the hour of death; and you will need Him to plead your cause when you stand before God at the judgment of the great day.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ATONEMENT

So long as man remained holy, there was harmony between God and him. But when sin entered the soul of man, enmity sprang up there so that he was no longer subject to the law of God as a willing, loyal subject, but said, in heart and conduct, that he would not have God to rule over him.

On the other hand, God, who had hitherto looked with favor and approval upon man and had "talked to him face to face as friend talks to friend," now began to manifest towards him His righteous indignation and to inflict upon him the threatened punishment. Man lost communion with God, and God pronounced upon him the curse of a broken law. He drove him forth from His presence and placed there the flaming sword, the emblem of His justice and wrath. Yet God still loved man with the love of pity and compassion, and provided a way by which sin could be pardoned and man be received back into His love and favor. That plan by which this was to be accomplished is called the *atonement*. It points to the work of Christ by which all of the legal obstacles to man's redemption are removed. It is the founda-

tion of all practical piety and the basis of the Christian's hope of pardon and acceptance with God. It is, therefore, important that every one should have clear and distinct views as to the meaning of the atonement. The Hebrew word denotes "*to cover over*" and then to forgive, to propitiate. The idea seems to be "to cover over an offense from the eye of offended justice by means of sufficient satisfaction, or the averting of the dreadful legal consequences of sin by means of the interposition of Christ in the sinner's behalf." As the Destroying Angel, when he saw the blood applied to the lintel and the door post of the house of the Israelite passed over that house, so when the blood of the Lamb of God has been applied to the soul of man he will be safe from the sword of God's justice. The Greek term means "*reconciliation, the removal of some hindrance to concord and fellowship.*" The English word denotes the *act of reconciling or uniting parties at variance* — the setting them at one — at-one-ment. When Moses saw two brethren quarreling, he acted the part of a peacemaker, a mediator and is said to have "set them at one." So Christ has become a mediator between God and the sinner, and by what He has done and suffered has brought about a reconciliation between God and man, has restored them to a state of oneness and harmony. It is, therefore, God's plan for restoring harmony between Himself and man. It is the reconciliation brought about between God and man by the obe-

dience, suffering and death of Christ in the sinner's stead. It is the result of the satisfaction rendered by Christ to the law by all He did and suffered in man's stead. He obeyed the law perfectly and paid the penalty fully, so that it is written, " There is, therefore, now no more condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." " We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. And not only so, but we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonemment."

The necessity of such a work on the part of Christ in order to effect reconciliation between God and man has been called in question by at least two classes. There are some who not only deny that an atonement was made, but also that it was necessary. They hold that God could and does pardon sin without any satisfaction to His law and justice. They ignore all other attributes that they may magnify His goodness and mercy, and claim that He is too merciful to punish sinners, and that He will, out of mere mercy, without any reference to law or justice, pardon and forgive the sinner. Others distinguish between absolute and hypothetical necessity (by the latter they mean that which flows from the decree or plan of God), and admit that God, having determined to pardon man by the plan of the substitution of Christ, He must do so, but that otherwise it would not be necessary. They admit a fitness in not

allowing those who have transgressed the law to go unpunished without some suitable notice of such transgression and that it is an impressive way of calling attention to the evil of sin to have it punished in the person of another when remitted to the guilty party; but still they deny that this was really necessary and claim that the same result might have been secured in some other way, without such satisfaction — that it was not absolutely necessary to man's salvation, but only because God adopted that way. The Scriptural view is that in order to secure man's salvation it was absolutely necessary that such satisfaction be made, that God has not and could not consistently receive man back into His favor without some atonement — without some satisfaction being rendered to His law and justice. The position is that God being what He is, it is morally impossible that He should receive men into His love and favor at the expense of His attributes, which require and threaten that sin must and will be punished. Every just and adequate conception of God must include the attributes of truth and holiness and justice. He must keep His word, or we could not trust Him. He must be holy, or we could not revere Him nor hope to be saved from sin by Him. He must be just, or else there will be no such thing as punishments and rewards, and all incentive to the pursuit of the right will be gone. Now if we grant these attributes to God, He must punish sin because He has threatened to do so.

" In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." " The wages of sin is death." " The soul that sinneth it shall die." He must punish sin because He is holy. Being perfectly pure and holy in Himself, He cannot approve of sin in others. He must hate and oppose it. That opposition He has expressed in His law, which threatens a curse upon all those who continue not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them. If He were to remit this punishment and receive the sinner back into communion with Himself without any punishment, it could be charged that He was conniving at sin and teaching men to regard it as a light thing that would not shut them out from God and heaven. If He inflicted the penalty directly upon man, then man must give up all hope of heaven, for it would require all eternity in which to pay the penalty of everlasting death. The only hope, then, for man is that some one of infinite dignity may agree to suffer the penalty in his stead — to do and suffer all that justice and holiness require of him; that some provision be made by which he may be cleansed from sin, for it is written, " Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." This provision is found only in the " blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth from all sin."

Again, if God be just, He must render unto every man according to his due. But that which is due to sin is death — spiritual and eternal death. Sin is directed against the infinite God

and is therefore worthy of punishment of an infinite character. This the sinner cannot pay except as he continues forever and forever under the curse and condemnation of the law. Hence the necessity of the provision of God's mercy as revealed in the death of His Son in behalf of guilty and lost sinners. "He gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."

So long as God remains true and holy and just, it will still be necessary for man to be received back into His love and favor only through the atonement of Christ. The law of God is such that there can be escape in no other way. It requires perfect and constant obedience in every thought and feeling and word and action, and pronounces a curse upon all who fail to render such obedience. All who confess that they have not so obeyed the law must confess that they are under its condemnation until they accept the righteousness of Christ. He obeyed the law perfectly and paid the penalty completely and reckoned it to man's account. When accepted by faith, man is justified from all those things from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. The sanction attached to the law of God is such that sin could not be allowed to go unpunished. Every one knows that a law without sanctions and penalties is of no value. If the state of Alabama were to publish a law and fail in every case to inflict a

penalty for its violation, it would be but a short time till the law would be worth no more than that much state advice. So God's law without its sanctions and penalties would be of little value. These must be paid either by the sinner or by his substitute. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." The very nature of sin is such that its commission puts the man who commits it out of right relations to the law. It is a violation of the law and brings upon the sinner the penalty, and he can never get back into harmony with the law till that penalty be paid. If he undertakes to pay it in his own person he will be held forever liable, for "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified." Only as some one who owes no obedience nor penalty to the law agrees to make the payment for him can he hope for pardon and acceptance with God.

The death of Christ declares plainly the necessity of such atonement. God would never have required the suffering and death of Christ in order to man's salvation had there been no necessity for it, and Christ would never have undergone the humiliation, suffering and death of the cross had there been no need for it. It was to accomplish a great purpose that could not be accomplished in any other way that God allowed His well beloved Son to "die, the just for the unjust." That purpose He declares was "to bring us unto God." We are brought nigh by the blood of the covenant because there is none other name under heaven

given among men whereby we must be saved. When the Savior drew near to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus and found them disappointed and in sorrow that Christ had been taken from them by death and their hopes of a grand earthly kingdom were gone, He rebuked them for their slowness to understand the teachings of their own Scriptures, and added, " Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? "

When the inspired writer would set forth the priesthood of Christ, he writes, " It is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." (Hebrews 8:3.) " For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience to serve the living God? " (Hebrews 9:13-14.) " And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." (Hebrews 9:27.) Here, then, we have the explicit testimony of God as to the necessity of Christ's offering in our behalf.

The fact that Christ did so offer Himself is asserted over and over again, so that all who receive and accept the plain teaching of the Word of God must admit that God teaches that as a matter of fact Christ has done and suffered in our behalf all that is necessary in order to our redemption. For example, it is said that " He gave Himself for us

that He might *redeem* us from all iniquity." It is said He "*suffered for our sins*, the just for the unjust." (I Peter 3:18.) Again "He *bore our sins* in His own body on the tree." (I Peter 2:24.) "He was delivered for our offences." (Romans 4:25.) And in Romans 5:10 it is written: "When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." This is God's own explanation of the suffering and death of Christ, His Son. It was to atone for sin and to bring man back into right relations to God and His law. It was to pardon, redeem and save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through Him.

The perfection and value of this plan of reconciliation may be seen by considering the dignity and glory of the person and character of Christ. He combined in Himself all of the high and noble qualities of a perfect man and all of the glorious perfections of the infinite God. He was gentle and kind and good. He was brave and bold and strong. He was faithful and sincere and true. He had all of the wisdom and power and holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, of God. He was the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person. He was human so that He could suffer, and divine so that He might give dignity and value to the offering which He laid upon God's altar that He might satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God. He was the chiefest among ten thousand and the one alto-

gether lovely. His offering, therefore, was such as was acceptable to God. It was perfect and complete. Then, too, the exactness with which He fulfilled every requirement of justice, holiness and truth made it of great value in the sight of God. From the time when He gave back the response, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, 'I delight to do thy will, O God,'" until that hour when He cried, on the cross, "It is finished," He sought ever to do His Father's will and to accomplish the redemption of His people. He obeyed the law perfectly and paid the penalty fully. He not only gave dignity and value to a great sacrifice, but wrought out a great and perfect righteousness for guilty and lost sinners. McChaine says:

"There is something infinitely grand and glorious about the righteousness of Christ. When the waters of the flood were upon the earth they covered the deepest valley and the highest mountain. Looking down from above, not one of them could be seen, but only the vast expanse of water reflecting the rays of the sun. So the righteousness of Christ covers over the deepest depth of our sins and the highest mountain top of our iniquity. Looking down from above not one of them can be seen, but only the vast expanse of the Savior's righteousness, reflecting the glory of the great Sun of Righteousness."

The perfection of the atonement is further shown by the approval given by the Father. In

the beginning of His earthly career God said of Him, " This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him." Thrice was this approbation given, and then, when His work was complete, He was received back into glory, thus giving assurance that He had done and suffered and accomplished all that was expected of Him.

The extent of the atonement is in keeping with its perfection. It accomplishes all God intended it should accomplish. There is a sense in which it is of service to all of the world. It reveals to all of the world the love of God. It exhibits an atonement sufficient for all who will accept it. It is to be offered to all of the world as the only remedy for sin. Even when rejected, it is to be of service to all of the world in causing it to be spared till a sincere offer of salvation be made to every creature. " This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all of the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matthew 24: 14.)

It is to be made efficient to all those given to Christ in the great covenant of grace. " Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possessions," was the promise of the Father. " Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may also glorify Thee. As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh that He might give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him," is the prayer of the Savior; and " All

that the Father hath given Me shall come to Me," is His assurance. The number of those thus given may no man know, but we have the best of evidence that it will be very great — even a great multitude which no man can number, gathered out of every nation and kindred and tribe and people. When all of God's people of the past and present, when the children saved through Christ's atonement, and the multitudes of the time in the future when " a nation shall be born in a day " shall all be gathered home to glory, the number of those saved may far outnumber those that are lost.

And yet all will not be saved, for it is a notorious fact that though the gospel feast be spread before the world and the invitation be given in all sincerity and earnestness, " Come, for all things are now ready," they all " with one consent begin to make excuse "— that many will not repent and will not believe and will not be saved. This is a sad fact that stares us in the face and forbids the belief that all will be saved. With this conclusion agree the words of Christ; " Not every one that saith unto me, ' Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day: ' Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? ' Then will I profess unto them, ' I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.' " (Matthew 7: 22-23.) " Whosoever, therefore,

shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32.) In that final day of separation He tells us He will say to those on His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," while to those on the left hand He will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Notwithstanding the infinite value and perfection of the atonement, some shall be lost and some saved.

The atonement is followed by many striking results.

It reveals in brightest light the love of God for lost sinners. It teaches us that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

It reminds us of the awful evil of sin. It tells us that in order that sin might be pardoned and the sinner saved, God's own Son must leave heaven, become incarnate, suffer, sorrow and die in the sinner's place, and rise again for his justification.

It reveals the means by which the way could be opened for God to exercise His mercy towards lost sinners without violating His justice, staining his holiness or disregarding His truth. Here "mercy and truth meet together and righteousness and peace kiss each other." It furnishes the

subject of the new song which the redeemed shall sing in glory: "Thou art worthy to take the book and open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." To the individual shall come many joys and privileges. The love of God, pardon and acceptance, justification, salvation, joy and peace here and eternal happiness hereafter. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

CHAPTER XIV

SALVATION APPLIED

Though God the Father hath drawn a perfect plan of redemption, and though Christ hath made an infinite atonement and wrought out a perfect and complete righteousness, and though that righteousness hath been clearly revealed and earnestly offered to man in the gospel as the only ground of pardon and acceptance with God, yet such is the *sinful insensibility* of the human heart that man will not accept it. The gospel feast hath been spread by the love of God and the invitation sent forth, "Come, for all things are now ready," yet "they all with one consent begin to make excuse." Not one would come to be a guest did not God do more than provide the feast. Did not God add the inward, effectual call of the Spirit, every member of our fallen race would find some excuse to stay away. In his sinful state man has no taste for the feast of good things the gospel provides. He does not see the suitableness of the salvation to his needs. Indeed, he does not feel deeply his need and does not see his danger as he should, and therefore does not seek refuge and satisfaction in the redemption purchased

by Christ. "Ye are not willing to come unto Me that ye might have life," was the charge the Savior brought against the men of His day, and the same charge may be justly brought against the men of this day. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned." (I Corinthians 2:14.) Hence if men are to be saved, God must, by the influence of His Spirit, draw them unto Himself and call them into His kingdom. He must "make them willing in the day of His power." He must "make them partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ by the effectual application of it to them by His Holy Spirit." This is the Spirit's part in the economy of redemption. The Father plans, the Son executes and the Spirit applies. The Father provides in His plan for the removal of all difficulties in the way of man's salvation and for the bestowal of all its blessings and privileges. The Son removes the legal obstacles and the Spirit the moral hindrances to salvation, and together the three persons of the Trinity invest man with all of the riches of grace here and glory hereafter.

In effecting His part of the work, the Holy Spirit does for man several distinct and necessary things. First of all, He *convinces man of his sin and misery.* In his natural condition man has no adequate conception of the nature and evil of sin. He is blind to his faults and insensible to his danger. He is like a man walking in darkness, not

knowing whither he goeth. He is like a man benumbed with cold, becoming more and more insensible as he draws near to death. He is described in the language used concerning the Laodiceans, each of whom is represented as saying, "I am rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing," and knows not that he "is wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." When the Holy Spirit enlightens the mind and applies the truth, He leads the sinner to see sin in its true colors and to weigh aright its terrible consequences. He sees it in all of its deformity and destructiveness. He sees that it aims its blows against God Himself, that it brings upon man suffering and sorrow and pain and death, and that it required the death and suffering of Christ that man might be delivered from its guilt and punishment. He sees not only that sin is a great evil, but that he is *personally a sinner.* Before Paul was brought under conviction, he was proud and self-righteous, but when the Spirit revealed to him the meaning of the law, he tells us that "sin revived and he died,"— that is, he saw his sinfulness and felt that he was under the condemnation to death. Job tells us that when he was enabled to see the holiness of God in contrast to his own sinfulness, he "abhorred himself and repented in sackcloth and ashes." David declared that "his sin was ever before him"; and the publican cried out in shame and anguish, "God be merciful unto me a sinner." Thus it is that every man feels when he

is brought under conviction for his sin. He acknowledges that he is sinful. He is filled with shame and sorrow for his sin, and acknowledges that he is justly condemned for his sin, and longs for pardon and for deliverance from its power and pollution.

Another thing which the Holy Spirit does for the sinner is to *enlighten his mind in the knowledge of Christ.* As sin prevents man from seeing the evil and danger of sin, so it blinds him to the beauty and value of Christ as a Savior. As it keeps him from feeling the presence and fatal influence of the moral leprosy of his soul, so it prevents him from feeling the need of treatment at the hands of the great physician. Not seeing his danger from sin, he does not seek deliverance from its power. He is blind to all the worth and worthiness of Christ the Savior. "There is no form nor comeliness in Him that he should desire him." He hides, as it were, "his face from him." He neglects to listen to His call and walks on in his blindness and sin. But when God, by His Spirit, enlightens him in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, he sees Him to be *the very Savior he needs* that He can teach him all that is necessary to salvation, that He did and suffered all that was demanded to atone for his sin and to reconcile him to God and that He can protect and shield him against every enemy and deliver him from every danger; that He is "the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely," that He is

able and willing " to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him."

Then, too, the Spirit *renews the will of man*, and thus enables Him to accept the salvation which God's love hath provided. Such is the terrible influence of sin upon the soul that it not only blinds man as to the evil that threatens his life and prevents him from seeing and appreciating the offered means of deliverance, but it *indisposes* him for the acceptance of the Savior. It keeps him from being able and willing to accept Christ. Hence the necessity of a radical change in the dispositions of man's heart. Hence the necessity of a change of his will. By the will as here used we mean, as Doctor Dabney has well said, " not the specific power of volution, but that which the Reformers and our Standards mean — the *whole faculty of active desire and purpose* "— the seat of man's moral dispositions and affections. It is here that depravity has its chief seat. While the whole soul is depraved by sin, yet the place where its power is most influential is in the underlying dispositions of the soul, because these give tone and direction to the action of the entire being. If sin gives character and color to these dispositions, it will influence and control the whole character and life of the man. The tiger is born with the tiger nature, and this determines all the acts of its life; so man is born with a sinful nature which influences all the thoughts and feelings and words and conduct of his life. The bad tree bears bad

fruit. The bitter fountain sends forth bitter water with infallible certainty. So will man's heart bear fruits of sin and send forth streams of iniquity till healed and changed by the power of divine grace. Though man could see the full evil of sin and the power of Christ to pardon and save, yet such is his helplessness, apart from the help of God, that he could not and would not accept the offer of deliverance. He is like the man at the pool of Bethesda, sick and helpless in sight of the healing waters but unable to step down into them in order to be healed. It requires the voice of Christ, accompanied by the influence of the Spirit, to enable him to rise, take up his bed, and walk. He is like the man with the withered hand, utterly unable of himself to stretch it forth till Christ speaks the word and gives the ability. He is like the leprous man, utterly unable to heal himself, and so must stand before the Great Physician and say in humble reliance upon His power, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." When Christ speaks and when Christ sends the Spirit of healing, then, and only then, can the leprosy of the soul be healed. Then, and only then, can the will be renewed and the underlying dispositions of the soul be so changed that the sinner will be inclined and enabled to accept Christ and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. This work the Holy Spirit does for man the sinner. He renews his will, changes his heart and imparts to him a a new nature, the characteristic feature of which

is holiness. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name which are born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13.) "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13.) "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and *renewing of the Holy Ghost*." (Titus 3:5.)

The next blessing the Holy Spirit bestows upon the sinner is to *persuade and enable him to embrace Jesus Christ as He is freely offered to him in the gospel.* Having revealed to him the evil of sin, pointed him to the Savior and so revealed His will as to incline him to seek the blessing of salvation, He further persuades and enables him to receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation as He is offered to Him in the gospel. While he halts between two opinions, hesitating to trust the Savior, the Spirit persuades him no longer to delay. He causes him to hear and believe the declaration, "Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Hearing and believing this, under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, he decides no longer to slight the offered mercy. Though having no strength in himself, he looks for help from Him who hath called him into His kingdom and receives the power to believe. He is persuaded and enabled to embrace

Jesus Christ as His Savior from sin, from its power and pollution, from its guilt and condemnation, from its stain and presence in the soul. He is thus enabled to look forward to the time when he shall be free from all sin and be satisfied by awaking with the likeness of his Lord and Redeemer. He accepts Him as his prophet that he may be taught and guided in all of his ignorance, as his priest that he may receive the benefit of the sacrifice He laid on the altar of God to atone for sin, and of His prayers and intercession which are offered before the Father's throne in heaven, and as a king that he may have the privilege of membership in His kingdom and be protected and defended against all the enemies of his soul. Thus the Spirit enables him to receive Christ and so secure an interest in all the privileges and the blessings of redemption.

This work of the Spirit in introducing us into the possession of the blessings of salvation is of such a nature that only a divine agent could accomplish it. He alone can work in us that deep and thorough conviction of sin which is necessary to lead us to hate and turn from it unto God. He alone can open the blind eyes to enable them to see and appreciate the salvation of God. He alone can change the heart and renew the will. And He only can sweetly persuade and enable us to take Christ to be our Savior from sin. Hence this work is compared to a "creation," to a "resurrection from the dead" and to a "quicken-

ing into newness of life." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, . . . and raised you up and made you to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." "'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' saith the Lord." Let us therefore pray earnestly unto God that this saving change may be wrought in our own hearts and in the hearts of others. Let us each pray with David, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." He has encouraged us thus to pray by saying, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good things unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." Then when our prayers are answered and we are become members of His kingdom through His gracious call, let us walk worthy of God. Let us "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" and "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called." "As He who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation," for it is written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

CHAPTER XV

THE CHANGE OF HEART

When we ask the question, "How may we become qualified for membership in the kingdom of God?", the Savior gives us the same answer he gave Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again," that is, a change must be wrought in your soul that you may be introduced into a new world of spiritual existence just as the birth of a child is necessary that it may enter upon its physical and mental existence in this world. You can no more enter into and enjoy spiritual life without this change than a child can enjoy the experiences of the natural life without being born. "The new birth is a spiritual life, without which you can no more live the heavenly life than we could an earthly life without being born into this world." The dispositions of your soul must be so changed that you will prefer holiness to sin and God to the world. A new spiritual life must be implanted in the soul which shall give tone and direction to all of the faculties, exercises and actions of the soul. There must be imparted to your soul a new nature, the distinguishing feature of which is holiness, just as the distinguishing feature of your old

nature was sin. You must be "created anew in Christ Jesus," "raised up from death in trespasses and sins" and "made alive in Christ Jesus." God must "create in you a clean heart and renew within you, a right spirit." This is a supernatural work, wrought instantaneously, internally, thoroughly and completely. "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (II Corinthians 5:17.)

This change is necessary for all classes and conditions of sinners, for the moralist as well as for the open and avowed transgressor. Human nature is very much the same everywhere and always. The moral image of God has been lost by all and must be restored to man before he can know and enjoy God and heaven. That act of God by which He brings about this change in man's moral nature which restores to him the divine image is called regeneration or the new birth. This is the change which our Savior declares must take place before a single soul can enter the kingdom of God and enjoy its spiritual privileges and blessings.

The character and dispositions of man's soul are such that there must be a change before man can be brought into peace and harmony with God and into the enjoyment of the blessings of His kingdom. The description given in the Word of God of the character of man's mind and heart is in language which is familiar to you all. It is written: "The carnal mind is enmity against

God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7.) "The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it." (Jeremiah 17:9.) "There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not." (Ecclesiastes 7:20.) This enmity must be slain and subdued before man can be brought into friendship and communion with God. The heart must be cleansed before it will love and serve God. The tastes, dispositions and desires that lead him away from God and into sin must be revolutionized and substituted by tastes and desires for that which is holy and good. The way of sin is the way of death. Before man can have spiritual and eternal life he must be delivered from spiritual death and translated into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God. His eyes must be opened that he may see the beauty of holiness. His heart must be changed that he may be led to love God and his will must be renewed that he may be enabled to serve Him. His entire moral nature must be changed that he may come into fellowship with Him who is "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners."

The character of God is such as to require this change on man's nature before he can be readmitted to the divine presence and favor. While man is sinful, God is perfectly holy and places before man His holy character as "the model into the likeness of which man is to be

fashioned before he can be admitted to the privileges of His kingdom. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." (I Peter 1:15.) "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3.) "'Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate,' saith the Lord, 'and I will receive you. And I will be a father unto you and ye shall be My sons and daughters' saith the Lord almighty." (II Corinthians 6:17-18.)

It is true that God hath promised to pardon and forgive sinners, but this must be done in such a way as not to disregard His own holiness, His justice and His truth. Sinners must come pleading the merit, the suffering and the obedience of Christ; they must come confessing their sins and they must come hating and forsaking their iniquities. "He that believeth on the Son hath life." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins." "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God for He will abundantly pardon." But the sinner will never thus return and confess and forsake his sins until his heart be changed. His sinful dispositions will certainly lead him away from God and into sin. Hence to win man back to Himself God must change the heart of the sinner. He must make him "willing in the day of

His power." He must break for him the fetters of sin and draw him with the cords of love that he may run after him and be saved." Hence the wisdom of David in his sinfulness and weakness in crying unto God, " Create in me a clean heart and renew within me a right spirit, O God." Until such a change is wrought upon the nature of man, he cannot enjoy the spiritual blessings God holds out for his acceptance both in this life and in that which is to come.

There are two classes of people under the gospel dispensation — those who enjoy the worship and service of God and those who do not. That which draws the line which separates these two classes is the presence or absence of the grace of God in their hearts. If they have been born into the family of God by the power of His Holy Spirit they are " glad when we say unto them, ' Let us go up into the house of God.' " They find pleasure and delight in the worship and service of God. They like to sing the songs of Zion. They like to read and hear the Word of God. They like to listen to the gospel of Christ. They like to bow before the throne of God in prayer. They love the Word of God, the house of God, the people of God and the service of God. They have been made the children of God and so have the spirit of children and the spirit of God whereby they cry " Abba," Father. The other class are those in whom this change has not yet

been wrought. They are at enmity with God. They have no taste for His worship and service. They do not love His house, nor His word, nor His people, nor His worship nor His service. "They mind earthly things." They seek most earnestly the pleasures, the possessions and the honors of this world. They show little interest in the extension and building of the kingdom of God. They do not seek earnestly to lay up for themselves treasure in heaven. They have not the mind and spirit of Christ, who spent His life doing good and in seeking to lead others into the possession of the blessings of the kingdom of God. Such persons do not have a real relish for spiritual blessings and employments. They do not seek as their associates the people of God, and do not resort to the house of God as a place where their hearts can find comfort and joy and gladness.

Now if such persons cannot find comfort and joy in the service of God here, how can they hope to do so in heaven? There everything is holy, the King, His subjects, their service and employments, their worship and adoration. The song of the holy angels of heaven is, "Holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory." The redeemed are represented as saying, "Glory and honor and power and dominion unto Him that sitteth upon the throne," because He "hath redeemed" them from their sins in His

own blood. It would be impossible for the unholy to enter with their hearts into the praises and employments of heaven.

We have seen that in order to really enjoy the ordinances of God's house and to take a delight in the duties of the Christian life, man must have his heart so changed as that he will have a relish for them. Men may, indeed, find an intellectual pleasure in listening to God's truth. Their tastes may be pleased and their emotions aroused in listening to the singing of His praise and they may even have their interest awakened in the outward prosperity of the Church; but until hearts have been taught the love of God, they cannot find real pleasure in the service and worship of God. It is love for God and holiness which renders the duties of the Christian delightful and joyful. It was when his heart had been touched with love and gratitude to God that David said, "I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice and my supplication. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live." (Psalm 116:1.) It was when his heart was attuned to the praise of God by manifestations of love that the worshipper of old said, "I was glad when they said unto me 'Let us go up into the house of the Lord.' I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." (Psalm 84:10.) It was love that moved Paul to work so earnestly, pray so fervently, and make such

great sacrifices in order to spread the gospel far and near in his day. And it is love that has prompted all of God's people since Paul's day to work and worship, to preach and pray, to serve and make sacrifices that the kingdom of God might come and that His will might be done on earth as it is in heaven. Now if this new love and life in the soul be necessary to delight in the service of God on earth, much more will it be necessary for the duties and pleasures of heaven. There all of the duties in which they engage and all of the pleasures in which they are to participate are to be perfectly holy. Unless, therefore, they possess the inward holy disposition, they cannot enter with delight upon the duties and pleasures of heaven. Should men with hearts at enmity with God and yet in love with sin be permitted to enter heaven and stand before the God of holiness, they could not find joy and happiness there. They would be in the immediate presence of a God who could see at a glance all of the moral deformity of their souls, and seeing, could but condemn. They would stand face to face with God, the Judge of the quick and the dead, and must dread the pronouncing of their doom. Like our first parents, when they sinned and when God called them to account, they would seek to hide themselves from God. Or like the wicked at the judgment of the great day, they would call upon the rocks and the mountains to fall upon them and hide them from the wrath of

the Lamb and from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Till man's sinful heart be changed, there can be no peace and happiness for him in the presence of the God of holiness and justice and truth. Till man's soul be renewed, he can neither enjoy the spiritual blessings of this life nor of that which is to come.

If it should be thought that if only a man could escape the penalty of sin, he would be willing to go to heaven with heart unchanged, and tolerate the holy worship and service which he could not enjoy, even that hope is shut out by the plain and emphatic declarations of the Word of God. It is written: "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3.) It is written: "To be carnally minded is death." (Romans 6:6.) It is written "There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Revelations 21:27.) It is written: "Follow holiness — without which no man shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14.) Could language be plainer, stronger or more positive and explicit? God, who alone has the right to lay down the terms and qualifications for membership in His kingdom, has declared over and over again that man's heart must be changed and his nature renewed before he can enter His kingdom. All who fail to seek and secure this change through the only plan God has ever revealed must not be

surprised if at last they find the door of mercy shut in their face, for God plainly and faithfully warned them of the danger and lovingly invited them to the pardon and cleansing provided in the gospel. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

The agent of this great change is the Holy Spirit. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." (John 3:5.) "Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13.) "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." (Titus 3:5.) The same almighty Spirit by which our spirits were created, recreates them in righteousness and true holiness. He it is who restores to our souls the image of God. He it is through whose power we are born into the family of God. The instrument which He uses in bringing about this change is the truth as contained in the Word of God. "The sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God." (Ephesians 6:17.) "Being born, not of the corruptible seed, but of the incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever." (I Peter 1:23.) This word is suited to the mind and heart and will of man so that when it is brought in contact with the soul and energized and blessed by the Spirit, it enlightens the mind,

purifies the heart and transforms the will. This, then, is the instrument which the Spirit uses in effecting that mighty change in the nature of man by which he passes from death unto life and by which his moral likeness to God is restored.

Let us, then, recognize the necessity for this change in the soul in order to qualify it for membership in the kingdom of God. Let us acknowledge our dependence upon God's Spirit to work this change. Let each one pray like David, "Create in me a clean heart and renew within me a right spirit, O God." Let each pray like blind Bartemus, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me." Or like Peter, "Lord, save us; we perish." (Matthew 8:25.)

It is sometimes said that if you convince men that they cannot save themselves, they will fold their hands in despair and give up all hope and effort for salvation, but this is not true to nature. Let a man in a burning building feel that there is yet a way of escape by some stairway through which he can reach a place of safety, and he will not seek outside aid, but will continue to collect his valuables and depend upon his own efforts for escape. But you let him know that the very last stairway has been burned away and he will cry for outside assistance, "Help! Help! Save me, or I perish!"

Let us learn to use the means and trust to God's blessing. The means are principally two — reading and hearing the Word, and prayer.

Read the Word and hear the Word and study the Word that you may learn the will of God: and then pray, earnestly, perseveringly and believingly for the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Plead the promise, "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." (Luke 11:13.) This essential change in your moral nature wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit can be had for the asking. Pray, then, earnestly and importunately until Christ be formed in you, the hope of glory.

CHAPTER XVI

EVIDENCES OF A CHANGE OF HEART

While it is important to know that God hath given to us a divine revelation, it is no less important that we be sure that we have accepted that revelation as the rule of our lives. While it should rejoice our hearts to know that a plan of salvation has been made known, it should prove a source of greater joy to be sure that we have been made partakers of its privileges and blessings. While we should rejoice in the fact that Christ came into the world to seek and save the lost, yet we may be permitted to rejoice with a greater degree of joy that Christ hath become our personal Lord and Redeemer, that we have received and rested on Christ alone for salvation as offered to us in the gospel. Such an assurance is within the reach of each believer. For this purpose the apostle John declares he wrote unto them that believe on His name, " that ye may know that ye have eternal life." (John 5: 13.)

Having considered the evidence in favor of Christianity as revealed in the Bible, we are now *to pass in review the evidence of our acceptance of Christ and the truth revealed through Him.*

We are to seek to answer such questions as these: *How may we know that we are Christians?* How may we be sure that we have passed from death unto life, that we have become the children of God and heirs with Christ of the privileges and blessings of the redeemed?

The importance of this question cannot be overestimated. It is a question of the *foundation* of our hopes of eternal life. It is a question of *the way* from earth to heaven. It is a question of the *only ark of safety* for our souls. It is a question of our *title* to the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away. It is a question of our *pardon* and *acceptance* with God; of our *adoption* into His family and of our *renewal* by the Holy Spirit, and of our *hope* of dwelling with Him in heaven. If men are careful to examine the foundations on which they build, the roads which they travel, the vessels in which they embark and the titles to their earthly possessions, then surely we should exercise more than ordinary care to make sure that our hopes rest on the Rock of Ages, that our feet are walking in the way to heaven, that we are in the ark of safety and that we have clear and undisputed titles to the heavenly inheritance. The Bible teaches us that we may come to possess a comfortable assurance that we are members of the household of faith and that, through Christ, we have life eternal. In this Book are laid down certain tests by which each professing Christian

may ascertain whether he be in the faith, and determine whether he has a well grounded hope of being found among the redeemed at the final day of trial.

What, then, are the evidences of our being in a state of grace? How may we know that God hath begun in us the good work which He is pledged to carry on till the day of Jesus Christ? This may be decided *by the soul's new view of sin.* Before conversion a man has low views of sin and is disposed to flatter himself that he is not so wicked in God's sight as others. He overlooks, conceals, and underrates his sin. He finds real delight in some of his sins and has little thought of giving them up, at least for the present. He seeks to excuse them and to find grounds of justification for them. But when he comes to know God and to view sin as God regards it, like Job he "abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes." He comes then to see sin in its true colors. He sees it in all of its hideousness and deformity, in all of its baseness and vileness. He learns to hate it not only because it brings the penalty of death upon those who commit it, but also because it offends God and degrades man. Such is his sense of the vileness of sin that he hates it and grieves over it and turns away from it unto God. He regards it very much as a man would regard a poisonous serpent that has bitten him. He hates and dreads it and turns to the great Physician who alone can heal him. He

looks to the cross and sees that it required the death and suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ to atone for it and that only through the mercy of God in Christ can it be pardoned and cleansed away. Hence he turns from sin back to the very God against whom the sin was committed, looking for pardon and acceptance through the merit of Christ, the Savior of sinners. Like Peter, he weeps bitterly over his sin and turns back to Jesus the Savior from sin. Like the prodigal, he comes to himself and says, "I will arise and go to my father and say, 'Father I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight and am no more worthy to be called thy son.'" He exercises the grace of repentance which sprang up in his heart under the influence of the Spirit which Christ hath sent into his heart. Such repentance is not the exercise of an unregenerate heart, but is an evidence that a divine power hath been working there. "Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, *to give repentance* unto Israel." If we are conscious that we sorrow for our sins, that we hate and abhor them, and that we forsake them and turn from them unto God, we have evidence that we are Christians. Our soul's view of sin has undergone such a change that it could have been wrought in our hearts only by divine agency. The current of our feelings has been so changed that it flows in a direction just the opposite from that in which it once flowed. We have come to hate what we once loved and to love that which

we once hated. We have passed from death unto life. We have been created anew in Christ Jesus. "Old things have passed away and all things have become new."

We may also judge as to our spiritual state by *the soul's view of Christ.* While the mind of the unconverted man may become convinced of the truth of Christ and Christianity, it will not see and accept Christ as a *Savior from sin.* The prophet Isaiah gives the true account of the estimate put upon Christ by the natural man when he writes, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men"— and "we hid, as it were, our faces from Him." But when we have exercised living faith, Christ appears to us in a far different light. "Unto you that believe He is precious." By the eye of faith we are enabled to see the beauty and perfection of Christ's character and to estimate aright the value of His work in our behalf. We can then see how He combined in His person all of the perfections of God and all of the virtues of unfallen man. We see in Him infinite power to protect us against all of our enemies, infinite wisdom to guide us in all of our perplexities, infinite mercy to forgive all of our sins, and infinite faithfulness and tenderness blended with human sympathy and love to enable Him to sympathize with us and to prompt Him to bear patiently with us in all of our weakness and infirmity.

We see in Him the very Prophet we need to teach us the way to heaven, the very Priest we need to atone for our sins and to plead our cause in the courts of heaven, and the very King we need to rescue us from the dominion of sin and Satan, and to translate us into the light and liberty of the sons of God. Faith sees in Christ the very Savior needed to rescue from guilt and sin and everlasting death, and so receives and rests on Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the gospel. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is *the gift of God*." When, therefore, we are conscious that we do trust in Christ alone for salvation, we may be sure that God hath given us this faith and enabled us to see Christ as a suitable Savior and to put our trust in Him as the only Savior whom God hath provided. If we have put our trust in Him, we have the assurance of God that we are possessors of eternal life. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life and I will raise him up at the last day."

Again, our changed feelings *as to God* and *to His People, His Word, His House*, and *His Worship* will serve as a test of our spiritual state. Whereas there was once enmity in the carnal mind and heart against God, there is now in the heart of the child of God a true and genuine love for Him. If we love God, then we are united to Him in the bonds of covenant grace. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him" and "*Every one that loveth is born of God.*" (I John 4:16,

and I John 4:7.) If, then, there be any true and genuine love in our hearts for God we may rest assured that it was begotten there by the power of God. "We love Him because He first loved us." Then if we love God, we will love *His people;* and if we love His people, we have an additional evidence that we are His children, for it is written: "By this we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (I John 3:14.) To this we shall be prompted by the Spirit. We shall see the image of God in others and love them for His sake, and we shall recognize them as God's children and so feel drawn to them as members of the same spiritual household. If we love God, we will love His Word. It is a revelation of His will and character. It tells us of His love in the gift of His Son, of the plan of salvation, of the home He is preparing for His people. Those who love God will likewise love His House. It is here that God meets with His people and bestows upon them rich blessings of His grace. It is here that they meet and hold communion with His people and it is here that they worship before His holy throne in prayer and praise and thanksgiving. It is here they study His Word and receive His sacraments, the seals of His covenant, and it is here that they bring their offerings for the extension of the glorious kingdom of which they are members.

The fruits of the Spirit in our lives and char-

acters is still another evidence of the presence of spiritual life in our hearts. As we know the character of the tree by the kind of fruit it bears, so may we know the character of the man. The kind of fruit which the Christian should bear is clearly indicated in the Word. " The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance, meekness. Against such there is no law." " If these be in you and abound, they make you to be that ye shall not be barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (II Peter 1 : 8.) To know Jesus Christ is to have eternal life.

To crown all other evidences of a renewed heart will be given *the witness of the Spirit.* God no longer speaks in audible tones to teach us truth and duty, but by His Spirit, through His Word and through our faculties, He enlightens, purifies and heals. He sheds abroad in our hearts His love and imparts to us a filial spirit whereby we cry " Abba," Father. We own God as our Father and He claims us as His dear children.

If we find that we are Christians, let us rejoice and be glad and seek more and more to walk worthy of Him who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and who " went about doing good."

If we find that we have no hope in Jesus, let us seek and find Him before it be too late. He is the only " way " that leads to God, the only " truth "

that makes wise unto salvation, and the only "life" that giveth eternal life. "Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near."

CHAPTER XVII

REPENTANCE

Before the gospel was clearly revealed to the world, God bore patiently with the sins of men and in a certain sense overlooked their transgressions. But when the gospel had been published and proclaimed, He commanded all men everywhere to repent and turn to Him as the only being worthy of worship. "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." This command comes to us with all of the force with which it came to those to whom Paul preached at Athens.

To obey this command it is necessary that we understand its full meaning. The literal meaning of the word here translated "repentance" is a change of mind with special reference to sin. It is the result of the enlightening, renewing influence of the Holy Spirit upon the soul. It is God's precious gift to man through His Son Jesus Christ whom He hath exalted "to give repentance unto man and forgiveness of sins." It has been well defined to be "a saving grace whereby a sinner out of a true sense of his sin and an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus doth, with

grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience." (C. Q. 87.)

With this definition in mind you will note that the change of mind involved in repentance manifests itself in a true sense of sin felt by the soul. In his natural, unrenewed condition, man has not that impression of the nature and enormity of sin that he should have. He regards it altogether too lightly. He thinks and speaks of it lightly. He acts as though it were a trivial matter and commits it with little reference to the account which he must at last render unto God for its commission. He sometimes shows his folly by making a mock of sin and by committing it with reckless disregard as to its consequences. If he be occasionally disturbed and alarmed by the warnings of conscience, this is not because he hates sin, but because he dreads its penalty. As one of the older writers puts it: "It is not sin but hell he hates." But when the Holy Spirit enlightens his understanding and renews his nature, man comes to look upon sin from a different standpoint. He then sees it in its real deformity and terrible hideousness. He comes to feel it to be an evil and bitter thing to sin against God. He sees how it defies the authority of God, violates His holy law and abuses His love and mercy as revealed in Christ Jesus. He has a new and a true sense of sin because he has been so enlightened as to be able to see and estimate the character and influence of sin. Such a view would

lead him to despair but for the fact that he has been brought to an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. You may see the contrast between the effect of sin in one who has never caught a view of the mercy of God in Christ and the effect on one who hath seen this vision, in the cases of Judas and Peter. Judas had a deep sense of the guilt and danger of sin without a glimpse of the infinite mercy of God, and so keen were the stings of remorse that he sought refuge in the grave of a suicide. He went and hung himself and went to his own place. Peter, on the other hand, had both a deep sense of sin and a clear view of the mercy of God, and therefore his heart was overwhelmed with sorrow and yet melted to tenderness and moved to trust. Hence he went out and wept bitterly; but when Christ sought to arouse his faith and love by that searching question, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" he responded in humble faith and confession: "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." So must every penitent sinner feel when he remembers his sinfulness and unworthiness — he must weep bitterly. So must everyone act who remembers the mercy of God in Christ Jesus — he must confess his unworthiness but still trust in Christ as the only hope of lost sinners.

Another evidence of the change involved in repentance will be grief for sin. Though the sinner may have the clearest view of the mercy of God and the surest ground of pardon and acceptance

through the merit of Christ, yet he will still grieve over the fact that he has sinned against the goodness and mercy of a tender heavenly Father and helped to cause the suffering and sorrow of the Savior. Just as a child will sorrow for the wrong he has done to a kind father or mother, even though assured that the offense has been forgiven and the punishment remitted, so the child of God will grieve over his sins, though they have been pardoned and he assured of his acceptance before God. This was the experience of David. Though God had forgiven him and restored to him His Spirit, yet he says: "My sin is ever before me." "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation and uphold me with Thy free Spirit." He could not forget his sin though it had been pardoned, and could not have that joy he had once known though he knew that God had been reconciled unto him. So the thought of the sins which he had committed will be a source of sorrow to every true penitent, however clear he may be able to read his title to mansions in the sky.

Along with this grief for sin there will be a true and genuine hatred of sin. The man who has been bitten by a serpent hates it because it injected poison into his system; so the man who has been stained and polluted by the presence of sin will hate that sin with all of his soul. Paul was no stranger to the war that was being carried on within his soul between the forces of good and evil, between the old and the new man, between the

principles of sin and holiness. In his distress by reason of this conflict he cried out: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then he looks to Christ and by faith sees the victory and exclaims: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Not only will the penitent be filled with grief and hatred of sin, but these will lead him to turn from his sin to God. He will hear and obey the voice of God as He says, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and unto our God for He will abundantly pardon." He will turn from his worst enemy to his best friend, from sin to holiness, from Satan to God. Like the prodigal he will say: "I will arise and go to my father and say unto him, 'I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight and am no more worthy to be called thy son,'" and like the prodigal he will arise and come to his Father and make the confession he had promised he would make.

Such will be the purpose of his heart and such the endeavor of his will that the result will be a "new obedience," new in motive, new in its rule and new in degree — the obedience of a new heart earnestly seeking to serve and glorify its Lord and Redeemer. Heretofore the fear of punishment may have restrained from sin, now the love of Christ constrains the heart of the penitent not to live unto himself but unto Christ who died and rose

again for his justification. "The goodness of God leads him to repentance." Such repentance will bear fruit in the daily life, leading men not only away from that which is evil, but towards that which is holy and just and good. Such repentance God will bestow upon all who confess their sins and look for mercy through Jesus Christ.

As God stands ready to grant this grace, so should man be ready to exercise it in his daily life. This he should do because God commands it. His right to issue such a command none can gainsay. He has this right by creation, for it was by His wisdom and power that all men were made. "Have we not all one Father, hath not one God created us?" Yea, "He is the father of our spirits and the framer of our bodies." He has this right by preservation, for "in Him we live and move and have our being." He has this right by redemption, for He alone hath the power and wisdom to form a plan by which we can be pardoned and saved, and He only has the right to determine the terms on which sinners may be received back into His favor; and He hath declared that except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. He has the right because He only can give the power and the grace to enable man to obey the command. It would have been mockery for anyone save the divine Savior to have commanded the man with the withered hand to stretch it forth, but since along with His command there could and did go forth the power enabling the man to obey, it was a com-

mand of love and mercy which restored the man's hand whole like the other. So will it be with the command to repent. God will give the ability and willingness to repent, and the sinner will be restored to his Father's home and have given unto him a right and title to the blessings which he had forfeited by his sin. Hence it is that God sends out this royal proclamation to men everywhere to repent and turn to God for salvation.

Another reason why you should turn back to God in true repentance is found in the fact that sin leads to ruin. It leads away from God, the source of all good. It leads away from light and holiness into darkness and spiritual death. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Who can measure all of the meaning wrapped up in that terrible word death? It means separation from the love and favor of God, which we call spiritual death. It means separation of the soul from the body, which we call physical death. It means final and eternal separation from the love and favor of God, which we call eternal death. It means the infliction of all of the penalty due to sin — all of the sorrow and remorse and suffering which shall be known in the other world, which we call the second death. It is towards all of this evil the soul is tending when it is going in the way of sin. As, therefore, a man loves his own soul, he should turn from his evil ways that he may live.

On the other hand, repentance leads to salvation and to all of the blessings which are included in

that term. It leads to Him who will pardon and forgive all of his sins. It will lead to Him who can cleanse him from his sins. It leads into the family of God and into the possession of all of the rights and privileges of the children of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. It leads in the way of peace and joy and happiness. It leads safely through the valley of the shadow of death up to "the presence of God, where there is fulness of joy, and to His right hand, where there are pleasures forevermore."

Then, again, the welfare of others should cause you to repent. Sin cannot be confined in its effects and influence to the person who commits it. Like an inherited disease its taint is transmitted from father to son, and like a contagious disease it spreads to those who come in contact with it. The man, therefore, who continues to commit sin does so not only in opposition to his own best interests, but in disregard to the welfare of his children and neighbors. No one but God can reckon the far-reaching influence of a single sin. Who, then, but God can measure the sum of all of the evil influences set in operation by a life of sin in the world? "Stand in awe and sin not." "Fools make a mock at sin." As you would shield your children and neighbors from the contagion of sin, hate it, avoid it. Turn from it unto God.

Gratitude, too, should prompt you to look unto God for salvation from sin. God, at a great cost, has provided for you a great redemption. Infinite

love hath spread for you the great gospel feast and the invitation hath been sent to you, bidding you come and enjoy its privileges and blessings. Will you not accept that invitation? A way of escape from sin and all of its evils has been effected by the love and sacrifices of the Savior. Will you not escape by that way? To fail to do so would be to become guilty of base ingratitude to the God of all mercy and to the Savior of lost sinners.

The longer you delay repentance, the more difficult will be your return to God. The farther away you go from God and holiness, the longer the way back. The longer you indulge in sin, the stronger becomes the habit of sin and the weaker to resist its power you become. The longer you live out of Christ, the greater the danger that you will never flee for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before you in the gospel. The longer you trifle with the offers of mercy and with the wooings of the Spirit, the greater the danger that you may reach the limit of God's forbearance and die in your sins without God and without hope. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

Then remember that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to render an account of the deeds done in the body. "God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained." Then an account must be given, not

only of every secret thing whether it be good or evil, but also of all of the opportunities we have had and slighted, of all of the invitations we have rejected, of all of the warnings we have disregarded and of all of the good influences we have resisted. Then must we answer for all of our failures to do the good we might have done and for all of the evil influences we have wielded over others. They will meet us there and serve as witnesses against us in that final day of trial. Who then will be our friend and advocate unless we repent of our sins and turn to Christ for salvation? Repent now and believe the gospel before it is too late!

CHAPTER XVIII

FAITH

The question which springs up in the mind of everyone who becomes interested in his spiritual welfare is this: How can I enter into the enjoyment of the blessings of salvation? How can I secure the pardon of my sins and enjoy the love and favor of God? How can I be delivered from the power and pollution of sin and have restored to my soul the image of God? How can I secure a title to heaven and to all of its blessings and joys, its honors and rewards? Since Christ has come to be the savior of sinners and since I am a sinner, how may I obtain an interest in His redemption? "What must I do to be saved?"

This is the question of all others most important to the penitent soul. This is a question which the wisest philosophers of earth have never been able to answer; a question for an answer to which the angels of heaven made diligent inquiry; a question that involves in its solution the destiny of the entire race of man; a question that required the wisdom of the Godhead to solve. The answer was given when Christ said, in answer to the question, "Who will go and whom shall we send?"

"Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O God." The answer was given when the angel announced the birth of one who should save His people from their sins: "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord." The answer was given more directly when Paul said to the jailer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and Thou shalt be saved." If we can understand this answer, then we shall have clear and correct views as to the way of life and the plan of salvation. This answer implies that, by reason of his sin, man is lost — is condemned and defiled by sin and liable to all of the penalty involved in the threat of death to those who disobeyed the command of God. It implies that Christ and Christ alone is able and willing to deliver man from that condition of sin and misery, and bring him into a state of pardon and acceptance before God. And it further implies that, in order to this rescue and in order to the enjoyment of the blessings of salvation, faith must be exercised on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is to this last statement that attention is to be mainly directed in this chapter.

That man is sinful and lost and that Christ is a Savior able and willing to save from sin has already been shown. It has been shown that these statements are taught most clearly in the Word of God and that they are pretty generally ac-

cepted as true among men. It is true that men do not have that deep sense of the greatness and guilt of sin which they should have and that they have not that high estimate of the worth and worthiness of Christ and of the absolute necessity of His work that they should. Still most men in Christian lands do admit that they are sinners and that they need a Savior and that Christ is the very Savior they need. But many of these are not ready to receive and act upon the third truth implied in this answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" viz. that faith must be exercised before sin can be escaped and the blessings of salvation enjoyed.

To know that you are lost and that Christ is a Savior will not profit unless He be accepted and trusted as a Savior able and willing to pardon and cleanse and save by virtue of what He did and suffered in the sinner's stead. You must "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" in order to be saved.

What, then, is it to have faith or to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? The word faith, in its most general sense, has been defined as "assent to truth upon the presentation of appropriate evidence." For example, let it be stated that a battle took place at a certain time and place. At first the report may not be credited, but let sufficient and appropriate evidence be furnished — let a courier come from the field of battle bearing a dispatch from the commanding general stating

that the battle had been fought, and let the character of the witness be reliable — and the news will be received as true because sufficient and appropriate evidence has been presented. Faith is reposed in, assent is given to, the statement because it is accompanied with convincing evidence. It is evident that this faith in its effect and influence will vary according to the evidence presented and according to the nature of that about which the testimony is given. If the truth attested be some fact or law in the physical world, while we may give our full assent to its truth, it will not move our moral nature. We may be led to believe, on good and sufficient evidence, that all bodies gravitate toward the centre of the earth and feel no emotion of joy or sorrow. But let it be certified to us that an innocent child hath been beaten or murdered, and at once every right-thinking man will feel that gross wrong hath been done and that the criminal should be punished. Our moral nature is here brought into active exercise. If the witness be reliable and the evidence clear and positive, then our conviction of the thing asserted will be complete. In the realm of religion it is God — speaking in His Word — whom you are to believe touching all that He teaches you concerning your ruin in Adam and your salvation through Christ. Some, indeed, have supposed that faith is only rational assent to the truth of the Bible, founded upon appropriate evidence. They view through the testimony

of others the miracles which were wrought in attestation of the claims of those who came to reveal the will of God, and conclude that the Book must be from God. They study the wonderful predictions recorded in the Bible and their remarkable fulfillment recorded in history, and see how perfect and complete is the fulfillment, and confess that this Book could not have been the product of human ingenuity. They study the Book itself and find how consistent it is in all of its parts, how accurate in all of its statements of the history and customs of the people mentioned, and how sublime its moral teachings, and how completely it describes the sins and the needs of the human soul and sets forth the provision God hath revealed for meeting and relieving these needs, and thence conclude that its writers were correct in holding that they "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"— that God spake through them to man. Upon these and other evidences they receive the Bible as true and as from God. This they call faith. And it is historical faith, but it is not saving faith. Hundreds of persons have believed all of this and yet remained "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." The devils are said to "believe and tremble." They doubtless believe with the intellect every truth God hath revealed to them, and yet they hate God and do all in their power against His kingdom and against Christ, His anointed Son. There must be more than a mere

intellectual assent to the truth revealed in the Bible. There must be an affectionate receiving of Christ as He is revealed to us in the gospel. The entire soul believes and trusts in Him as the Savior of sinners. The mind sees Him to be the truth; the heart fastens its affections on Him as one worthy of its love and confidence; and the will trusts in His person and work for salvation. Hence faith has been well defined as "a saving grace whereby we receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation as He is offered to us in the gospel." The soul receives Christ as a Savior and rests upon His word and work alone for salvation. It depends upon His suffering, obedience, death and resurrection as its only hope of pardon and acceptance before God. It is the soul's receiving Christ and looking for salvation only for the sake of what Christ is and has done for its salvation. It has been well said that such faith is the "hinge on which our salvation turns, that it is the eye that looks to Christ, the foot that goes to Him and the Hand that receives Him." Faith is made up of two elements — confidence and trust. We must be thoroughly convinced that Christ is every way worthy of our confidence — that He is both able and willing to pardon and save; that He loved us and gave Himself for us; that He suffered and died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God; that He did and suffered all that God required in order to our salvation; and that He gained the victory over all of our

spiritual enemies; that He rose from the grave and that He ascended to heaven, there to intercede in our behalf; that for His sake God will freely and fully pardon and save all who accept Him as their Savior; that if we thus receive and depend upon Him for salvation, God will save us. This describes the first element of faith — your confidence that He can and will do all He promises in order to your salvation.

But we are not only to believe that Christ will save us if we accept Him; we must actually receive and trust Him for salvation. We must exercise our faith in Him by trusting in Him for salvation. You might know a man of such integrity of character and such skill in business that you would be willing to place in his care and keeping your most valuable worldly possession — your gold and silver, your name and children; that would be one element of your faith in such a man. Then you might have occasion to exercise that faith by actually entrusting to his keeping such possessions. So we must not only believe that Christ is able and willing to save us, but we must actually receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered to us in the gospel. There we find Him offered to us as a prophet to show us the way of life. We must humbly consent to be led and taught and guided by Him. He is presented to us as the only priest who can lay upon God's altar a sacrifice sufficient to atone for our sins and to plead our cause before His Father

in heaven. We must confess to Him our sins and ask Him to plead in our behalf the merit of His own suffering and death. He is revealed to us as our King to command and to protect us. We must submit to His authority and place ourselves under His care and keeping, and trust in Him to give us the final victory over all of our spiritual enemies and to bring us at last into His kingdom of glory in heaven. He is made known to us for the purpose of saving us from the guilt and power and pollution of sin. We must take Him to be our Savior that He may work this salvation for and in us so that at last we may be satisfied when we awake with His likeness.

Christ, then, is the direct object of our faith, and salvation from sin the great blessing which we are to receive through Him. It is true we are to receive and confide in the entire revelation which God hath made in His Word, but the more immediate and specific object of our faith is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only through Him that salvation comes to sinners, for it is written, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus." And "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth upon him." (John 3:36.) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

The result of believing on Christ will be salva-

tion in its broadest, richest and fullest meaning. We can never know the full value of salvation except as we are made to see and feel the evil and danger of sin. It was by sin that we lost communion with God. While man bore God's likeness there was perfect harmony between God and man, but when he sinned he sought to hide himself from God and God banished him from His presence that he might be made to feel the evil of having departed from the living God, the source of all good and happiness. Through the salvation brought by Christ we who were afar off, "without God and without hope in the world," are made nigh by the blood of the everlasting covenant. We who were strangers are made fellow-citizens in the kingdom of God. We who were thirsty are led back to the fountains of living waters that flow from the throne of God. We who had wandered from the fold are sought and found by the good Shepherd and brought back to the fold. We who had been alienated from God by sin are rescued and restored to communion with Him through Jesus Christ our Lord. Not only did man lose communion with God but his heart became defiled by sin; his mind was henceforth blinded to the beauty of holiness, and his will perverted into habits of sin and wickedness. Without divine aid he can never hope to bear the image of God which was lost in the fall. It was to accomplish man's deliverance from sin and his restoration to holiness that Christ came. "This is

a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." Salvation restores holiness to the soul of man and thus brings him back into harmony with God. The evils which accompany man in his sinful condition are manifold. The wrath of God abides upon him. The guilt of sin goes with him wherever he goes. The death of sin seizes upon his body and soul, manifesting itself in physical pain and sickness and death and in mental suffering — care, sorrow and remorse. And all of these are but forerunners of evils far worse which are to overtake him in the world to come. From all of these Christ comes to rescue man by breaking the fetters of sin, by destroying the works of the devil and by translating man into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God.

From the loss of communion with God, from His wrath and curse, from the guilt and power and pollution of sin, from its terrible effects upon body, mind and soul, both in this world and in that which is to come, we may all find deliverance if we will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only so, but through Him we shall be brought into all of the privileges and blessings of the redeemed in heaven. How reasonable, then, the command, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved!" He is infinitely worthy of your trust. He has all of those qualities which should com-

mend Him to your love and confidence. He has all knowledge, so that He knows perfectly all of your needs, all of your sins and of your enemies, all of your temptations. He has infinite power and resources, so that He can do all that needs to be done in order to your salvation. He has infinite love and compassion, prompting Him to give to you just that which you need to bring you back to God and heaven. He is divine so that He can represent your cause within the court of heaven. He is human so that He can sympathize with you in all of your trials and sorrows and temptations. He has already atoned for your sins, conquered your enemies and entered within the holy of holies to plead your cause before His Father's throne. He invites your confidence and trust, and He deserves your trust and love and obedience.

Then, too, you need just such a Friend and Savior. In your ignorance you need His guidance, in your weakness you need His help, in your guilt you need His mercy, and in your lost condition you need His salvation.

If you would not only be saved, but be the means of saving your children, your friends and your neighbors, you must take Christ to be your Savior. You cannot hope to lead others to love and trust the Savior unless you are willing to love and trust Him yourself. Like Andrew, you must first find and trust Jesus yourself and then may you hope to lead others to Jesus.

Then if you do not trust in Christ, there is left absolutely no other foundation on which you may rest your hope of salvation. "There is none other name, under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved, neither is there salvation in any other." As, therefore, you would escape the doom of the lost, as you would be the means of saving others from spiritual and eternal death, as you would have the wants and longings of your own soul met and supplied, and as you would find some one worthy of your love and confidence, look to the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in Him alone for salvation. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

CHAPTER XIX

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

In order to be a Christian, and especially to be an efficient Christian, it is important to have a clear and distinct knowledge of what it is to be a Christian.

In general terms, a Christian is one who accepts the teaching of Christ, trusts in the person of Christ, imbibes the spirit of Christ, partakes of His grace, and seeks to obey His commands and imitate His example.

It is not wise nor necessary to wait until you understand all that Christ taught before becoming a Christian, but it is essential that you have a knowledge of the plan by which Christ saves from sin. You must understand that you were guilty and condemned and lost by reason of your sin, but that Christ, in love and compassion, took your place under the law and did and suffered all that was required of you, and that for the sake of His work, suffering, death and resurrection, all of your sins may be pardoned and you may be received back into the love and favor of God, be cleansed from sin and be brought at last into all of the blessings and privileges of Heaven. This

much must be understood by everyone who hopes to be saved. He must at least understand that he is a sinner and that Christ is a Savior from sin.

Then, in order to get the benefit of Christ's work, it is necessary that a man accept Christ as His Savior, that he receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the gospel. Then, too, he must catch the spirit of Christ, and experience something of the grace of Christ in his soul. Then it will be his earnest desire and effort to do the will of Christ and to imitate His example. This obedience and this imitation will not be perfect, but they will be real and sincere. His nature having been renewed by the power of the Holy Spirit, he will seek to walk in newness of life and to do those things which are pleasing in the sight of Him whom his soul loves and adores. Hence, growing out of this definition, we may discover certain specific elements which go to make up every genuine Christian. For one thing, he will come to have a real sense of sin and such an appreciation of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus that he will hate and forsake his sins and flee to God for mercy and pardon. God's direction to those who would receive His mercy is, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." The message of John the Baptist was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"; and this was the message

of Christ Himself: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3.) The sinner must come to Him with such sorrow for sin and such a vision of God's mercy as will both prompt and encourage him to turn away from his sins and seek pardon and acceptance at the hands of the God of all mercy and grace. The man who does not thus repent of his sins and look to God for mercy has not yet taken the first step in the Christian life.

Again, the Christian is one who trusts in Christ alone for salvation. He has found out that he can never earn salvation by anything which he can do, that he can never atone for his sins which have been committed in the past, nor ever keep the law perfectly in the future, and that therefore he must look outside of himself to some one higher and holier and more perfect than himself for salvation. When almost in despair lest he may never find a way of escape, Christ is revealed to him in the gospel as one both able and willing to do for him that which he could not do for himself. He sees that Christ has obeyed the law perfectly, that He has paid its penalty fully, and that pardon is offered to him through His merit. He reads and believes such passages as these: "He died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God"; "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life"; "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." He believes these assurances, he trusts in Christ, to whom they direct him, and

finds peace and pardon and salvation. . . . He gladly rests his all on the word and promise and work and person of Christ the Savior of sinners.

His change of view as to sin and Christ is the direct result of the work of the Holy Spirit. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name which are born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12-13.) It is by the Spirit of God that the sinner is born again, quickened and raised up and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. His mind is enlightened, his heart changed, his will renewed and his whole soul so renovated that henceforth he has a new nature, the distinctive feature of which is holiness, not perfect but prevalent.

The soul, thus renewed, will have something of the spirit of Christ because the grace of Christ has been imparted unto it and the love of Christ shed abroad in it under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. Thus he will be influenced and constrained not to live unto himself but unto Christ who died and rose again for his justification. Hence he will earnestly strive to obey every known command of Christ, his new Lord and Master, and will seek to imitate the example of Him who came to rescue him from sin and death.

It has been objected that it is unreasonable to expect man to imitate the example of Him who was "holy, harmless and undefiled and separate

from sinners and made higher than the heavens." Of course it is not required of the Christian that he imitate the example of Christ perfectly, nor that he imitate those divine acts by which Christ was distinguished as divine. Man cannot be expected to exercise divine power nor take to himself divine prerogatives. He is not required nor expected to perform miracles nor to pardon sins. But he can imitate those human traits and actions which rendered Jesus so beautiful in His character and so lovely in His life. Even these actions cannot be imitated perfectly by imperfect, sinful man, but they may be imitated sincerely though imperfectly. The little child can copy the writing of the teacher, though his effort be far short of a perfect imitation. We may follow in the footsteps of Jesus, though we follow afar off. In this sense we may imitate all of those merely human traits and actions which were revealed to us in the life and character of Christ. As Christ loved God and man, so may each of His followers cultivate in his heart love to God, who so loved him as to give His only Son to suffer and die for him, and to his fellowmen who are bound to him by common hopes and needs and salvation. As Christ was gentle and kind and tender and good in His feelings and conduct towards the poor and sinful and needy, so should they be who claim to have caught His spirit and who seek to extend the blessings of His gospel to others. As Christ forgave His enemies and prayed for those who did

Him wrong, so may His disciples learn to do according to His plain and positive command, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust." As Christ was honest and honorable and upright in all the relations of life, so should be all those who seek to walk in His footsteps. As Christ was accustomed to worship and pray and serve, so should each of His disciples seek to do.

There are many and strong reasons why we should become Christians. God commands it. When He brought His Son into the world He said to men, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him." He commands and enjoins upon us each and every element that enters into the Christian character. He bids us forsake sin and put on the Lord Jesus. He teaches us that we must have the spirit of Christ and receive His grace into our hearts. He directs us to obey His commands and imitate His example. This duty is laid upon our hearts and consciences by the highest authority. To receive and rest upon Christ for salvation, to obey His commands and to imitate His example is to comply with the will of our God. To refuse to become a Christian is to reject the highest author-

ity, refuse the gift of God's love, and disobey His most positive command. As we would be loyal and obedient unto God we must accept His Son and seek salvation through His merit.

We should accept salvation through Christ because there is no other way. If there were several mediators and several plans of salvation equally good, we might reject one and take another; but when God has clearly revealed to us that there is but one mediator and but one way of life, we ought to accept promptly Christ as our Savior and salvation through Him as our way to life eternal. It is expressly declared in the Word of God that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ"; that "no man cometh unto the Father but by Me"; and that "neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.)

By becoming Christians we can best serve our fellowmen. The spirit of Christianity is such that it has done more to bless and regenerate the world than all other systems. It holds up to man a higher standard and ideal, and prompts him to put forth the most earnest efforts to improve and develop himself that thus he may become the most efficient workman in the service of God and his fellowmen. It binds upon him the duty of seeking the highest good of his neighbor, and holds out to him the highest and richest rewards

for his service, both in this life and in that which is to come. It teaches him to be "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." The moment a man submits to the authority of the Lord, He sends him forth into the vineyard to work. He teaches him to do "good unto all men as he has opportunity." He sends him forth to fight the battles of the right against the wrong. He bids him "go home and tell what great things the Lord hath done for thee and how He hath had mercy on thy soul." He commissions him to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

To become a Christian one becomes an heir of God, "to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last day." Who can measure the value of such an inheritance? Who can measure the riches and honors of such a kingdom? To be a child of God is to have the protection of God thrown round you, to have His guidance, His love and His help in every time of need. Who can tell the glory, the honor and immortality and eternal life laid up for those who put their trust in Him? "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." We know not what we shall be, "but we know that when He appeareth we shall be like Him for

we shall see Him as He is." We feel assured that whatever He may prepare for His people will be worthy of His own glorious nature, suited to the wants of His people and sufficient to keep them from all spiritual want. "They shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more, for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto fountains of living water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

By becoming Christians we can best glorify God. We are taught that "he that honoreth the Son honoreth the Father," and that by letting our Christian light shine we "glorify our Father which is in heaven." In proportion as we obey the command of Christ, seek the salvation of our souls and the spiritual welfare of our fellowmen, will we show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Each believer becomes a monument to the wisdom and power and goodness of God. Each act of service rendered to God or man serves to illustrate the grace of God and displays His goodness, love and mercy. While we cannot add anything to the essential glory of God and while we cannot make any brighter the brightness of the glory of His Son, we can at least let that glory shine into our hearts and through our lives and thus increase the size of the circle in which the rays of His declarative glory shine, and the number of those who shall behold and admire that

glory. Thus we shall best illustrate the power and goodness and glory of God in our own lives, and best win others who shall show forth His praise. As, therefore, you would be true to yourself, to your fellowmen and to your God, become a Christian without further delay. Enlist in His service and work for the advancement of His cause. If you are already a Christian, become an earnest, consecrated follower of Christ that you may secure the highest good for your own soul, best promote the welfare of your fellowmen and the glory of the Lord God of your salvation.

CHAPTER XX

THE METHOD OF JUSTIFICATION

The friends of Job assumed that the only explanation of his afflictions was that he had been guilty of some great sin. Bildad, among others, took this position and asserted that Job had talked too much and had claimed too much as to his relation to God and as to his service to God. To this charge Job made no reply. Then Bildad still further asserted that God would not "pervert justice nor cast off the perfect man." To this position Job assents, but raises the question as to where such a man could be found, and the further question, following the failure to find such a man, as to how should sinful man be just with God. No more important question could be proposed. It is a question of pardon and acceptance before God. It is a question of deliverance from the penalty of sin and of restoration to the favor of God. It is a question of acquittal before the bar of God's justice. It is a question of salvation. It is a question of the possession of a title to the heavenly inheritance and so of our right and title to all of the privileges and blessings of heaven.

What, then, is it to be just with God? What

is justification? It is the opposite of condemnation. To be condemned is to be declared guilty. It is to be declared liable to the penalty of the law. It is the assertion by proper authority that because the law has been violated the offender must be punished according to the provision of the law. To be justified, then, would be to be declared not guilty. It is to be declared not liable to the penalty of the law. It is the assertion by proper authority that because the demands of the law have been satisfied the sinner who accepts that satisfaction shall not be punished.[3] It includes all this and more, for it provides not only that the sinner shall not be punished, but shall be pardoned and received back into the favor of God. In language with which most of you are familiar, "justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone."[2] It would be interesting to dwell upon each element of this definition, noting that it is an act of God alone, that it springs from His free and sovereign grace, that it covers the forgiveness of all of our sins, that it restores us to a position of righteousness and favor before God, and that this blessing is bestowed upon us only for the sake of what the Savior did on our behalf. It is probably more important to dwell upon this last element of the definition than any of the others, both because it relates to the very

foundation of our salvation and because it has been so misrepresented and misunderstood by those who would teach men what is the real ground of their pardon and acceptance with God.

Some have found this ground in the general mercy of God apart from the atonement of Christ. While it is readily admitted that to find the source of our salvation we must go back to the love of God, it should not be overlooked that it is to that love expressed through the channel of the death of God's beloved Son in the sinner's room and stead. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." (I John 4:9.) The idea that God would exercise that mercy towards guilty and sinful man without any satisfaction to the law overlooks the fact that God has other attributes which must be maintained just as carefully as mercy. His holiness, which impels Him to punish sin by forever barring it from His presence, must be kept unspotted. His justice, which prompts Him to render unto every man according to his deeds, must be kept untarnished; and His truth, which renders it certain that He will do all that He promises or threatens, must not be broken. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "Shall not the Judge of all of the earth do right?" "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." (Psalms 89:34.) He threatened to pun-

ish sin with death, and with death He hath and will punish sin. To fail to do so would be to violate His truth and holiness and justice. Hence you cannot look for pardon and acceptance merely from the general mercy of God.

Others have sought a ground of justification in good works which man can do. They hold that the evil which man has done may be counterbalanced by the good deeds which he may subsequently render before God. This class is represented by the young man who came to Christ, asking Him, "Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" and who, when referred to the commandments, claimed to have kept them all from his youth up. The Savior pointed out to him the fatal defect in his obedience when he revealed to him his unwillingness to give up his worldly possessions for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The trouble with this theory is that the good deeds presented do not come up to the requirements of the law. This is God's law. It is perfect like its Author. It requires perfect obedience in every thought and feeling and word and deed at every moment of life. Only such obedience can win the favor of God and secure the salvation of the soul. But no mere man ever hath or can present such obedience. All come short in some respects. "There is not a just man on earth that doeth good and sinneth not." But if he sins, his obedience is not perfect and hence cannot stand the test of the law. No

man has ever done the best he could, and if he did the best he could, it would not be good enough to meet the demands of the law. Besides, "God requireth that which is past." Suppose a man could begin today and live a perfect life till the day of his death. Would that settle the claims of the law for the past? Suppose you were in debt to a merchant one hundred dollars for goods bought in the past, and that you were to propose to settle your account by paying cash for all purchases made from this day on till the end. Would such a proposition be accepted? Would not the merchant answer, "What about your old account? How do you propose to settle that?" So "God requireth that which is past." How will you settle the old disobedience by your proposed future obedience? This God declares to be impossible for "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." The law was never intended to atone for sin. It warns against sin. It reveals sin and threatens sin with the merited punishment, but makes no provision for the pardon of sin. The carpenter's square does not make the crooked timber straight. It only makes plain the uneven places. So it is with the law. It shows the extent of our deviation from the obedience which God requires.

Still others have thought to commend themselves to God and secure pardon at His hands by penance and sorrow. By performing some

painful work imposed by the Church and by deep sorrow and mortification of the flesh they hope to satisfy justice for sins committed after baptism. Such a means of satisfaction finds no authority in the Word of God. It dishonors the atonement of Christ and offers the discharge of one duty as a satisfaction for the neglect of another. The infliction of pain on the body can never atone for the sin of the soul which uses the body as its instrument of sin. Sorrow, so far from being a satisfaction for sin, is an acknowledgment of sin. Why be sorry if you have not sinned? Sorrow may lead one to go out and hang himself and thus become guilty of self-murder. Neither sorrow nor bodily pain can ever satisfy the law of God for the sin of the soul. They are only forms of works; they are confession of sin and they are the efforts of sinful men and must, therefore, fall short of satisfaction to God's holy and perfect law.

Some, taking faith from its position as the instrumental cause of salvation, have assigned to it the merit of the meritorious cause. Instead of viewing it as the hand by which the blessings of pardon and salvation are received, they claim for it a purchasing power by which it secures for those who exercise it the pardon and favor of God. The fatal objection to this theory is that faith is represented as the gift of God and as the means by which, rather than the cause on account of which, we secure salvation. "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves;

EPH 2:8

it is the gift of God." If it be the gift of God, it cannot be that which purchaseth salvation from God. Faith does not earn salvation; it simply accepts the redemption which Christ purchased and bestowed upon man as a free gift. "The author and finisher of our faith" is God and not ourselves.

Some have supposed that man shall be restored to the favor of God by long and severe punishment in the other world. Such persons forget that punishment does not purify. It may serve to vindicate justice and to deter men from sin, but it has no power either to secure pardon or to cleanse the heart. On the contrary, it frequently has the effect of hardening the heart and arousing a spirit of revenge. Then, too, death has no power to change the moral character of the sinner. If he dies in his sin, he will go into eternity with a sinful nature. He will thus go beyond all the restraining influences of home and church and state and the Spirit. If his life here, under circumstances so favorable to holiness, failed to incline him to turn to God and live, what hope can there be that amid the unhallowed influences of the world of lost spirits he will bring forth fruits meet for repentance? What hope that the sorrow and suffering which he shall experience there will tend to soften and purify his heart or appease the wrath of God? There he will not only be beyond the bounds of all the good influences which were thrown around him in this world,

but amid the most degrading influences of the abode of the lost from among angels and men. There Satan, the arch enemy of God and man, has his habitation and exercises his rule and dominion. There thousands of his demons stand ready to do his bidding. And there many wicked men "without God and without hope" are bound to exert an influence far from favorable to repentance and faith and obedience. So far from hoping that men may there cease from sinning, the probability is that they will sink deeper and deeper into sin. They dwell in the very home of sin, and are surrounded with its most determined advocates. As long as they sin they must be punished. This punishment is not to be a limited one, but, according to the teaching of the only Savior whom God hath revealed, "eternal" and "everlasting." So that the door of mercy is forever closed there and between that lone world of despair and the heaven to which they refused to go, "there is a great gulf fixed so that they who would pass from hence cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." (Luke 16:26.)

What, then, is the true and only ground upon which the penitent sinner can base a hope of being pardoned and received back into the favor of God? The only Scriptural answer is that it is the righteousness of Christ. It was this that gave Paul confidence in the power of this gospel as he went to preach it in the great and wicked city of Rome. He said: "I am not ashamed of

the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; for therein is revealed the righteousness of Christ." That righteousness is made up of all that Christ did and suffered in our stead. It consists of His perfect obedience to the precepts of the law, and His suffering and sorrow and death in behalf of sinners. Hence it is written: "Christ is the end of the law of righteousness to everyone that believeth." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "He died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Hence He is called "our righteousness," and hence Paul prayed that he might be "found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Philippians 3:9.)

If, then, this be the only righteousness through which our sins can be pardoned and we stand acquitted before the bar of God, we should all seek promptly and seek earnestly a part in it. This is the only foundation on which we can build with confidence for eternity. This is the only wedding garment in which we can enter the palace of the King and be guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb. None who have been called into the kingdom should boast, for their salvation is all of grace and hence they should ascribe all the glory and honor of their redemption unto Him who loved them and gave Himself for them.

CHAPTER XXI

MEMBERSHIP IN THE FAMILY OF GOD

Of all of the disciples of Jesus, the apostle John seems to have had the best opportunity and the most intense desire to learn the love of God as revealed in Christ, the Son. From that day on which he heard the message, " Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," until the day of his death he followed Jesus that he might know His character, enjoy His love and do His will. Early in life he became one of the twelve friends of Jesus who enjoyed the rare privilege of being under the personal instruction of the Master for three years, of witnessing His works of power, hearing His words of wisdom and then of being sent forth to preach His gospel. Within this band of friends John and two others were permitted to be drawn closer to the Savior than the other disciples. These three alone were with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration to witness His glory there; they alone were with Him in the Garden to see His agony there; and they alone were allowed to be with Him when He entered the chamber of death and raised the daughter of Jairus. Then closer than the other two was John

drawn so that he was known as "that disciple whom Jesus loved." He leaned upon Jesus' bosom at the Last Supper; to him the Savior told the awful secret of who should betray Him; and to him the Savior commended His mother as He hung upon the cross. And John outlived all of the other apostles, so that he had a longer period in which to know and experience that love. Who, then, so well qualified to testify as to the love of God in Christ Jesus?

And what is his testimony? Hear it in his own words. "Herein is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins." "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." That which excited the wonder and admiration of the apostle of love was that God should make provision to bring guilty and lost sinners into His family through the gift of His own Son. Men may be called sons of God as they are creatures of His power. He is their Father and they are His children. "Are we not all children of one Father? Hath not one God created us?" In this sense, too, the angels are spoken of as the sons of God. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth, when all of the sons of God shouted for joy?"

Individuals and even nations are called the sons of God because of special privileges bestowed upon them. For example, when God sent Moses to lead

the children of Israel out of the land of bondage, He directed him to say to Pharaoh: "Israel is my son, even my first born." (Exodus 4:22.)

Then men are called the sons of God, the children of God, when God adopts them into His family. "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Galatians 4:4.) "Ye are all children of God by faith in Christ." The act by which one person receives another into the room of a child and gives to him all of the rights and privileges of a son is adoption. This custom seems to have been practiced among many nations. Among the Egyptians Moses was adopted into the family of Pharaoh's daughter and became her son. Among the Jews, Esther was adopted into the family of Mordecai and became his daughter. Among the Romans the act of adoption was made a matter of public concern and record. A man intending to adopt a child was required to draw up a paper setting forth his reasons and secure the consent or approval of the proper officer. When this was secured, a bill was introduced into the Assembly to make the adoption valid. Then the intended father appeared before the proper authority and said to the child: "Art thou willing to become my son?" And the child, or some one speaking for him, answered: "I am willing." Thus the relation was established, the child entered the new family, se-

cured the name, became subject to the authority and was made an heir of the father. It is with reference to this custom that the sacred writers speak when they would illustrate the act by which God receives believers into His family and gives to them spiritual rights and privileges. "It is an act of God's free grace whereby we are received into the number and have a right to all of the privileges of the sons of God." It flows from God's love and is according to His gracious purpose.

"But it may be asked if we become the *born sons* of God by regeneration, or the new birth, where is the consistency of our being made the *adopted sons* of God? Where is the propriety of a father adopting his own child? Well, the answer is plain and easy: Regeneration gives us the *nature* of a child; adoption gives us the *rights* of a child. We must remember that as sinners we lost both our filial spirit and our filial standing — both the heart and the status of a child. We need the restoration of both. Now regeneration gives us the nature, the spirit, the temper, the disposition, the heart of a child, while adoption gives us the rights, the privileges, the legal standing of a child. If an earthly father had cast off and disinherited a bad-hearted child, then the restoration of that child would require that two things be done; — (1) that his heart be changed, and (2) that the decree of disinheritance be annulled and a decree

of inheritance be entered in his favor. For the sinner, regeneration does the one, and adoption does the other." (Dr. R. A. Webb.)

Concerning the wonderful love of God in admitting sinful men into this relation, John writes: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." He seems to feel unable to express fully his wonder and gratitude at such a manifestation of love and calls upon us to behold and admire it. Just as when the angel, who was sent to announce the birth of the Savior, thought upon the love of God shown in that event, and said, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," so when John meditated upon the love of God in elevating men into His family, he exclaimed, "Behold (mark with attention) what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." Just as when Christ stilled the tempest the disciples were astonished and said, "What manner of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey Him," so when John contemplated the action of God in adopting himself and others into His family, he said, "What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us!"

The magnitude of God's love in receiving us into His family may be seen by considering the

dignity and glory of Him who adopts us. The value of adoption depends upon the character and position of the person adopting. To be adopted into the family of a wise philosopher is a greater privilege than to be received into the family of an ignorant man. To be adopted by a king would be esteemed a greater privilege than to be a member of the family of an humble subject. To be given a place in the family of an upright judge would certainly be better for a child than to be made a member of the family of a condemned criminal. If it be an honor to be a member of the household of a wise man, what must be the estimate put upon the honor of membership in the family of the God who gave to that man all of his wisdom? If it be an honor to be the child of an earthly king, what an honor it must be to claim membership in the family of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! If it be a privilege to be related to an earthly judge, what a privilege to be related to the Judge of all of the earth! It is God, your Maker, all wise, all powerful, and perfect in justice, goodness and truth, who adopts sinful man into His family. And this He does not as men do — because of need of companionship — for already He enjoyed the society of the Trinity and of thousands of holy angels, and it needed but His creative word to bring thousands of other beings into existence. It was for our good and for His glory that He chose to bring

into His family members of our fallen race. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed."

The dignity of the Being through whom we are adopted serves to magnify the love that led the Father to receive us into His family. It is through the Son that we receive membership in the family of God. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." This Son was "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person." He possessed all of the wisdom of God, all of the power of God and all of the goodness of God. "He thought it no robbery to be equal with God." Yet, that man might share a place in the family of God, He "made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Philippians 2:6-8.) "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

The humble and low estate from which we are adopted still further increases the wonder of God's love in receiving us into His family. This high honor was not bestowed upon an angel, but upon man, "made a little lower than the angels." It was bestowed upon man, not as he reflected the

divine image, but upon fallen man — when the crown had fallen from his head and when the image had faded from his soul. Sin had invaded the soul of man and had darkened the mind, hardened the heart, perverted the will and depraved his entire moral nature. Yet God stooped to adopt sinful and lost men into His family and to make them " meet to become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

The high dignity, honor and privileges bestowed upon those who are thus adopted should increase our estimate and appreciation of the love of God who provides them. When men adopt children into their families, they give them their names; so, when God adopts us into His family, He calls us by His name. He claims us as sons and daughters in His household. But He not only calls us by His name; He imparts to us His nature. In this respect He goes far beyond men. They may give their name to children, but cannot impart to them a new nature, so that they know not but that some evil disposition, inherited from their fathers, may in after years develop, and bring sadness and disappointment where hope and joy and satisfaction were expected. When God adopts into His family, He imparts to the person adopted a new nature. " To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on His name, which are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." They

are born of God and so partake of His nature. That likeness may at first be very faint, and may be obscured by indwelling sin, but it will grow more and more distinct until it shall be complete and the child of God shall be satisfied by awaking with His likeness. "Beloved, now are we sons of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be; but we know that when He appeareth, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

When men adopt children into their families, they give to them all of the rights and privileges of children born in the home. Has such a child a right to expect the love of the father? Then have we, who have been received into the family of God, a right to enjoy the love of a tender heavenly Father. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." Has the child the right to look to the earthly father for guidance and instruction? So have we the right to look to God for guidance and instruction. He says: "I will guide thee and teach thee in the way in which thou shalt go." "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Has the child a right to expect of the father protection in the hour of danger? So has the child of God a right to look to his heavenly Father in every time of trial and temptation for protection against the enemies of

his soul. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "No temptation shall overtake you above that ye are able to bear, but with every temptation I will provide also a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it."

No one can tell fully all of the privileges and blessings of a child in the home of a good father; so no one can ascribe adequately the joys and privileges of the children of God. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." "The Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."

Then, too, the adopted child becomes the heir of his father; so the children of God are "heirs of God and joint heir of Christ." The character of the inheritance to which we are heirs beautifully and strikingly illustrates the love of the Father who provided it. It is free from all suffering and sorrow and sin and death. It is replete with all joy and happiness and holiness and life. It is to be shared with angels of all ranks, and the redeemed of all ages and from all lands. It is to be with Christ in the New Jerusalem. It is to be "incorruptible, undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last day." What a glo-

rious hope! What a blessed destiny! What wondrous love! If we have been received into the family of God let us prize the exalted privilege, be grateful for the love of God who bestowed it, and seek daily to live and walk worthy of our Father. If we are still spiritual orphans, let us seek admission to the family of God through faith in Christ the Savior, that we may share the blessings and privileges of the sons of God.

CHAPTER XXII

SANCTIFICATION

God begins the work of restoring His image to the soul in the new birth, continues it in the work of sanctification and completes it when He welcomes the believer into glory. "Grace is glory begun, glory is grace completed." "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." The work which God accomplishes upon the soul from the moment when He renews the heart till the time when He completes the work of cleansing is called sanctification.

The leading thought conveyed by this word is that of separation. Sometimes it is the separation of persons or things from a common to a particular purpose, as when God says, "I will prepare or sanctify destroyers against you." (Jeremiah 22:7.) Sometimes it denotes the separation of persons or things from a secular to a sacred use. Thus the temple, the priests, the levites and the sacrifices were all set apart for use in the service of God. In this sense God set apart His own Son to the great work of redemption; and Christ is said to have sanctified Himself for His

people in that He devoted Himself to the work of their salvation. Then, too, God is said to sanctify Himself when He declares or shows the holiness and glory of His character in contrast to that of all other things. We are said to sanctify God in our hearts when we regard and treat Him with that reverence and awe which are due unto His high and holy character. Under the ceremonial law people were sanctified or cleansed from defilement by complying with the requirements of the levitical law. Under the moral law persons are said to be sanctified when they are cleansed from the moral defilement of sin by the wonderful provisions of the gospel. The idea in both of these cases is that of separation, or cleansing from that which these laws respectively forbid. Under one the man who became ceremonially unclean by touching the leper or the dead was required to submit himself to a process of purification before he could enter the congregation or engage in the service of the sanctuary. The other law requires that he who has become defiled with sin must be cleansed from its pollution before he can enter heaven and enjoy the blessings and privileges of the upper sanctuary. It is in this last sense that believers are said to be cleansed and sanctified that they may be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." It denotes that work by which sinners are cleansed more and more from sin and brought more and more into likeness of their Lord and Redeemer until at

last they shall be satisfied by awaking with His likeness. "Sanctification is the work of God's free grace whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (I Thessalonians 4:3.)

The agent of sanctification is the Holy Ghost. It must be accomplished according to the divine will and by divine power. It is a work of such importance and magnitude that it could never be accomplished by human power. No power but that of the almighty Spirit by whom we were made can restore to our souls the image of God lost through sin. The Father wills the result. The Son by His life and death and resurrection meets the demands of justice, atones for sin, and removes all of the legal obstacles to man's redemption, and then the Holy Spirit is sent of the Father and the Son to work the moral change in man's nature, to qualify him for receiving and enjoying the blessings of salvation. Hence this work is ascribed to the Spirit. He begins, He carries on and He completes the work of cleansing man from sin. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." (John 6:63.) "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mrecy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior." (Titus 3:3-6.) "God hath, from the beginning,

chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (II Thessalonians 2:13.) In regeneration the Spirit restores spiritual life and implants holy dispositions, and in sanctification He carries on the work of enlightening, renewing, cleansing and purifying until death, when He removes the last stain of sin and thus prepares the soul for the holy enjoyments, employments and associations of heaven.

This work of the Spirit extends to the "whole man." As sin defiled every faculty of man's soul, darkening the mind, depraving the heart, perverting the will, and robbing man of his moral likeness to God, so must the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit be felt in every power and capacity of man's nature. The mind must be enlightened, the dispositions of the heart changed, the will renewed and the image of God restored. The body, under the influence of a sinful and unchanged soul, is frequently used for unholy purposes, but when the soul which inhabits and controls the body has been renewed, the body must thenceforth become an instrument only for holy ends and purposes, and thus the blessings of the cleansing extend to the body as well as the soul, and hence the prayer of Paul for his fellow Christians: "I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This work of God's Holy Spirit might be

wrought at once in the moment of regeneration, but as a matter of fact both the Bible and Christian experience seem clearly to teach that it is a gradual, progressive work, not ordinarily completed until the hour of death. When God justifies, He does so by one instantaneous act in the court of heaven, pardoning all of our sins and accepting us as righteous in His sight only for the righteousness of Christ reckoned to our account and received by faith on our part. It is an act by which we are at once delivered from a state of guilt and condemnation and transferred into one of pardon and acceptance before God. So when God regenerates a soul, He does at once, by an immediate act of His Holy Spirit, impart to it the principle of spiritual life. The soul, dead in trespasses and sins one moment, is made alive in Christ Jesus the next moment. This act is wrought in the soul, and brings about a radical change in the character and disposition so that at once the soul begins to love the things which it once hated and to hate the things which it once loved. It ceases to be at enmity with God and becomes a lover of that which is holy and right and good. But when God begins the work of making us holy He does not at once complete the work, but by a gradual process He works the cleansing necessary to prepare us for heaven. Having begun a good work in us, He will carry it on till the day of Jesus Christ; but this He will do by enabling us more and more to die unto sin

and live unto righteousness. Hence such expressions as these: "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ"; "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." (II Peter 1:5-7.) If we were made perfect in holiness at once, there would be no room for growth and increase in the Christian virtues. Besides, it is expressly said in the first chapter of I John: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Paul, with all of his wonderful attainments in the divine life, said: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before: I press forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14.) One person may grow more rapidly than another, and the same person may grow more rapidly at one time than at another, but all true believers must pass from the condition of being babes in Christ to that of being strong in the Lord and in the power of His might by a process of gradual growth. "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby." It is as much a law in the spiritual life that men should grow in grace as it is a law in the physical world that

plants and animals reach their maturity by growth. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground . . . and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." (Mark 4:26-28.) The seed is cast into the ground. The early and the latter rains fall. The seed germinates, springs up, grows in height and strength, blooms and yields fruit for the use of man, who in the harvest time gathers the fruit into his storehouse for service in the future. So the principle of spiritual life, implanted by the Spirit in the heart of man, and watered by the showers of God's grace, springs up, grows, develops in strength, and yields fruit in the garden of the Lord until the harvest time when the Lord will send forth the angels to gather the fruit into His garners. As leaven gradually assimilates and transforms the entire lump of flour, so the grace of God in the heart of man gradually brings the whole character and disposition of the soul under its power and influence. As the child grows and develops in passing from childhood to manhood, so the child of God grows in grace and knowledge as he passes from childhood up to the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus. This work must be carried on and on until at last every power and faculty of mind and heart and will shall have been

brought under the complete control of the divine Will and until the soul shall reflect the image of God perfectly.

As to the manner in which this change is wrought by the Spirit we do not fully understand, but of the fact there can be no reasonable doubt. It is a fact that the principle of physical life hath been given to the plants of the earth, and that this principle, placed in material substance, grows and develops, we know not how, and yet we receive and act upon the fact at every step of life. Shall we not, then, receive the teaching of God's Word that the principle of spiritual life imparted by divine grace to the soul of man can and does grow and assimilate to itself that in which it is placed until the God likeness be evident to all who have eyes with which to see? Is it not an admitted fact that God made our souls and gave us the power to think and love and choose? Can not the same almighty Power rectify and renew our souls when they have become impaired by sin? The man who can make a watch, can repair that watch. The God who can make a soul in His own image, can restore that image when it has been marred by sin. It was good philosophy as well as good theology which led David to go to His God and pray: "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Take not thy Holy Spirit from me, but uphold me with thy free Spirit." He felt sure that the same almighty Being who had created all souls could heal and

cleanse a soul that had become defiled with sin. It matters little to us how the change is wrought if only such a change restores us to the likeness of our Lord and Redeemer.

We are assured that when this change is begun in our hearts, it will be carried on to completion. This might be expected from the fact that God is the author of the change. The will of Him who doeth all things according to His own pleasure is our sanctification. The gift and sacrifice of His own Son was "that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." His prayer, based upon that sacrifice, was, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth"; and the very purpose for which the Holy Spirit takes up His abode in the heart of the believer is that He may cleanse, enlighten, purify, and save from sin. The power of God is infinite. His purposes must be accomplished and His promises be fulfilled. God will surely do all of His holy will. His will concerning His people is that they shall be "sanctified," and His promise to them is that they shall be made like to Christ His Son. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Then "We all with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (II Corinthi-

ans 3:18.) Such is the change to be wrought upon everyone who is brought into the family of God.

By justification, through Christ, he secures a title to membership in God's family; by regeneration he is born into that family; and by sanctification he is brought into likeness to His heavenly Father. The model after which this work shall be wrought is the character of Him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. The agent by whom it is accomplished is the Holy Ghost and the instrument wielded by the Holy Ghost in effecting this change is the truth of God as revealed in His Word. The Word is expressly called "the sword of the Spirit." Christ prays: "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth." In all ordinary cases the truth must reach the heart before the Spirit works the change. In the case of those who die before their minds are sufficiently developed to apprehend the truth, we hold that God does, for Christ's sake, cleanse them from sin by the power of His Holy Spirit. But in the case of adults the truth of God is the invariable instrument by which the Holy Spirit slays the carnal enmity of the human heart and enlightens it in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The truth must be present and the Spirit must use it before the enmity of the heart will be overcome and the eyes of the understanding will be opened, the heart changed and the soul cleansed.

"God hath chosen us unto salvation through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Hence the importance of bringing the truth into contact with the mind and heart of the Holy Spirit that the Holy Spirit may bless it to our conversion and growth in grace and knowledge. It is to the Spirit what the sword is to the soldier. It is to the soul what light is to the eye. It is to the believer what the sun is to the plant. It is to the soul what bread is to the body. The Word, as energized by the Holy Spirit, convicts of sin, enlightens the understanding, leads in the way of holiness and causes the child of God to grow in grace and in fitness for service here and for happiness hereafter.

Put a high value, then, upon the Word of God. Study its holy teachings and pray unto God to open the eyes of your understanding that you may be able to "behold wondrous things out of His law." Ask Him to teach you the gospel that the Word reveals that it may be made to you the power of God unto salvation. Find in the Bible teaching concerning the progress of sanctification a test of your Christian experience. If you are a Christian, the will of God is that you grow in grace and that you be enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness. If this change is being wrought in your heart, there must be some progress. The live tree will grow and develop rapidly or slowly according to the soil

and surroundings; so the Christian made alive in Christ will grow and develop in holiness according to the use he makes of the means of grace which God hath appointed and according to the company with which he is surrounded. A Christian may be hindered in his growth and may even seem, in seasons of coldness and indifference, to go backward, just as a tree may show little signs of life and growth in the cold and storms of winter. But, as in the springtime the tree will give evidence of life and growth, even so will the believer, under the influence of God's grace and the use of the means, give forth signs of the life and growth that mark his spiritual development. As surely as the principle of spiritual life has been implanted within your soul by the power of the Holy Spirit, so surely will it manifest its presence and power by your growth in the divine life.

Let each believer test his own life. Do you see more clearly and hate more intensely the sins that separated you from God? Do you see more clearly and love more ardently the holiness without which no man shall see the Lord? Has the power of sin over you been weakened? Have your habits of holiness been strengthened? Does your love for Christ, His cause, His service and His people increase? If you can return satisfactory answers to such questions, you have reason to believe that the work of grace has been begun in your heart and that it will be carried on to completion. To that end pray more earnestly for the

presence, influence and power of the Holy Spirit by whom alone you may hope to be delivered from the power and pollution of sin, and transformed into the likeness of God.

CHAPTER XXIII

GOOD WORKS

In the mind of the apostle Paul there was no conflict between faith and works. He who taught so clearly and so earnestly that men are justified and saved only through faith, insisted with equal zeal and clearness that faith must manifest itself in outward conduct and behavior. He who proclaimed so fervently the message of God, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," delivered also, with equal fervor, this message of God, "This is a faithful saying and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These are good and profitable unto men." (Titus 3:8.) God intends, then, that emphasis be put upon both of these great truths, that we are saved through faith in the person and work of Christ, but by such a faith as manifests its genuineness by leading those who possess it to seek earnestly to imitate the example of Him "who went about doing good." We are to believe in order to be saved, and we are to do good because we are saved. The impor-

tance of care in the maintaining of good works can scarcely be overestimated.

By good works we are to understand such works as are done by one whose heart has been changed, by a real child of God. The virtues and good deeds of those who have not learned to know Christ and whose hearts have not been changed, have their place and their value among men, but are not to be ranked as belonging to the same class with those wrought by a soul that has been renewed by the Spirit of God, and wrought under the influence of His love. The works of all others, however valuable, lack the essential quality which entitles them to be called good, viz.— the love of God. Good works are such as are authorized and in harmony with the Word of God. They must be done not only out of love to Him, but in accordance with His will. Concerning all other works God asks, "Who hath required this at your hands?" In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9.) Good works must also spring from good motives, such as the love of God and a desire to promote His glory and to comply with His will. "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men." Works, then, which spring from a renewed heart, which are in harmony with the divine law and which are prompted by the love of God, cannot fail to be pleasing in His sight. These and only these are good works in the Bible sense.

It is important that we weigh well the duty of doing such works. They will furnish, for our own satisfaction, an evidence of the change of our hearts. No question should be deemed of greater importance to us than that relating to our standing before God. Are we His friends or His enemies? Are we members of His kingdom or are we aliens? Are we His children or are we children of the wicked one? Two facts are clearly taught in the Word. One is that "the carnal mind is enmity to God, not subject to the law of God." The other is that when the heart undergoes the great change necessary to bring it into the family of God, it will love God and seek to do those things which are pleasing unto Him. "We love Him because He first loved us." And if we love Him, we will keep His commandments and His commandments will not be grievous unto us. If our faith "works by love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world," then the wondrous change has been wrought there by the Spirit of God. We have been born into the family of God and so have passed from death unto life. As the life of the natural body manifests its presence by outward movement, so does the presence of spiritual life in the soul make its presence known by outward spiritual, holy living. Or as the fruit reveals the character of the tree, so the deeds of the life give evidence of the state of the heart. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

By maintaining good works you will best con-

mend the cause of Christ to your fellowmen. If Christianity causes all who accept it to lead better and purer lives and to abound in good works, others will be able to see and appreciate its character and value as being the source of so much good. Just as men value the tree that bears good fruit, so will they prize that which prompts and enables men to bring forth such peaceable fruits of righteousness in their lives. The graces of faith, hope and charity are invisible to the human eye until they become incarnate and manifest themselves in the daily life of some good man or woman. It was when Christ went about doing good that men came to know the love and compassion that dwelt in His heart. In this way, also, may His followers commend His cause to their fellowmen. Such good works will prove of great service to others. "These things are good and profitable unto men." That is, they will confer real and lasting benefit upon them. Their wants will be relieved, their hearts will be comforted, their footsteps will be directed, their burdens lightened and their lives and homes be made brighter. By good works orphans are fed and clothed and taught and trained and made happy and useful men and women. By good works the widow is comforted in her affliction and defended in her helplessness. By good deeds the sick are healed, the hungry are fed, the destitute are clothed, the ignorant instructed and the wayward are reclaimed.

The forms of good deeds are as varied as the needs and misfortunes of the human race. Not only these outward and worldly blessings by the hands of those doing good, but the higher and more lasting spiritual blessings are often conveyed to men through the office of good deeds. The law of love not only requires that we do good to all men as we have opportunity, but that we seek to bring to them the highest good within our ability. Now God has seen wise to put within the hands of men the ability, under His blessing, of being the means of introducing others into the possession of the highest spiritual blessings. This is well expressed in the fifth chapter of James. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins." You can be the means of turning a sinner from the ways of sin, you can be the means of saving him from all of the evils wrapped up in the idea of spiritual and eternal death. You can be the means of leading him to the Savior and into all of the blessings of salvation. You can show him the way of pardon and cleansing and grace and glory and honor and immortality and eternal life. You can show him how to escape the dark abode of the lost and direct him in the way that leadeth unto "God's right hand where there is fulness of joy, and to

His right hand where there are pleasures forevermore."

The faithful maintenance of good works will meet with a gracious and a glorious reward in heaven. The Savior Himself taught, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." (Matthew 10:42.) And with special reference to the leading of men into the highest spiritual blessings it is written, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many unto righteousness as the stars forever and ever." (Daniel 12:3.) From the smallest to the largest, every blessing which we may be the means of securing for our fellow men shall meet with the approval of our heavenly Father and receive at His hand its reward in heaven. This will be a reward of grace and not of merit. We shall not be rewarded on account of our works, but according to our works. The sole and sufficient ground of our salvation, of our pardon and acceptance before God, must always be the merit of what Christ did and suffered in our stead. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus." But it has pleased God, after that we are saved through grace, to bestow upon all who seek to do good to others some testimonial of His appreciation of that which has been done. Not the

smallest act of Christian kindness and courtesy will escape His attention, nor fail of His reward.

But in making this distribution of rewards He teaches us that He will be guided by the law of due proportion. That is, He will reward every man according to the good he hath wrought since he was saved. To the servant who had gained, with one pound, ten pounds, He said: "Well done, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful over a very little, have thou authority over ten cities." To the servant who had gained five pounds, He said: "Be thou also over five cities." (Luke 19: 17 and 19.) It may be that by doing this good with their Lord's pounds, each became developed in capacity for enjoying just so much of the bliss and glory of heaven. All will be happy there, but all will not be prepared to take in and enjoy the same amount or degree of happiness. As Matthew Henry quaintly puts it: "All cups will be full alike, but all cups will not be large alike." Some by spiritual exercise in doing good will have developed a larger capacity for seeing and enjoying the glory of heaven. All cups of happiness will be full to overflowing, but each will be large or small according to the effort put forth after the call came to enter the kingdom and go work in the vineyard.

Still further, God will be glorified by the good works of His people. Of course nothing can ever be added to the essential glory of God, because from all eternity He has been infinite in glory and

in all of His matchless attributes. What is meant is that by good works men can show forth the praise and glory of their God. They can magnify their God and make Him to be seen to be holy and merciful and good and kind in the grace which He hath bestowed upon them and caused to shine out through their lives to enable others to see the beauty of His salvation and the glory and power of His work of grace in their hearts and on their lives. Hence the directions of His Word: "Shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Men cannot see God, but they may see His glory reflected in His works, whether those works be the hills and mountains or the lives and conduct of those who are His workmanship in Christ Jesus. These all shine in the reflected light of the great Sun of righteousness. As the moon catches up the glory of the sun, when that is beyond our vision, and reflects back its glory upon earth, so believers receive into their souls something of His glory and let it shine out through their lives that "men may see their good works and glorify their Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16.) Believers can at least spread abroad the rays of light and glory which fall upon them from their Sun. They can thus widen and enlarge the circle in which the rays of God's declarative glory shine.

It is worth our effort and care, then, to make honest and earnest effort to maintain good works before our fellowmen. If by good works we can give to our own hearts a comfortable assurance that we are God's children; if we can thus commend the cause of Him whom we love so well; if we can benefit our fellowmen and glorify our God by doing good in the world; then surely we should strive with all of our hearts to do all the good we can while the days are going by. As we would be true to ourselves, true to the cause of Christ, true to our fellowmen and true to our God, let us be careful to maintain good works.

Let us not fail to consider the result of the neglect to show such kindnesses as are described under the expression "good works." If you will turn to the close of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew you will find that Christ, who is to be our final Judge, has forewarned us that the failure to have done these little acts of kindness and mercy toward the poor and the needy will be enough to shut one out of heaven and to shut him up in the prison house of the lost. The Savior does not represent men as failing of an interest in the kingdom of heaven merely because they have been guilty of great and heinous transgressions, but even for their failures to do the kindnesses they might have done to His representatives on the earth. "Then shall He say also to them on the left hand, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his

angels; for I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger and ye took me not in; naked and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison and ye visited me not.' Then shall they also answer Him, saying, 'Lord when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?' Then shall He answer them, saying, 'Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.' And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Matthew 25: 41-45.)

CHAPTER XXIV

ASSURANCE

Is it possible to know that we are Christians and to be sure that we are heirs of eternal life? Extreme answers have been given to this question. Some contend that it is impossible to decide this question till we awake in the eternal world. According to this view, we must walk in spiritual darkness during our entire earthly pilgrimage. "It would be presumptuous to claim a title to the heavenly inheritance." They admit the superior value of spiritual blessings and they cannot deny the fidelity of Him who hath promised eternal life to them that believe on Him. Still they fear to claim any degree of certainty as to their entrance into the promised inheritance. They *hope* that they will at last know that blessedness, but they hesitate to claim that they *know* it. On the other hand, there are those who not only claim to know as to their Christian hope, but insist that everyone who has been born into the kingdom of God must be fully assured of that fact. They make assurance an essential element of faith. They reject utterly the idea that one may be a Christian without knowing that he is a child of God and an heir of heaven.

The truth probably lies between these extremes. The Bible clearly teaches that everyone who believes on the Son of God hath everlasting life. It teaches that it is the privilege of every child of God to come to a comfortable degree of assurance that he is in a state of grace and that he shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last day. But one may be a Christian without having sufficient evidence to put it beyond all doubt that he has passed from death unto life. The apostle John, addressing those whom he recognized as fellow Christians, uses language which plainly implies that some of them had not yet attained this assurance, but that it was within their reach and that he had written to them to aid them in arriving at that happy stage of Christian experience. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye *may know that ye have eternal life.*" (I John 5:13.) They had believed on the Son of God, and therefore were saved. They were real, true Christians, and yet they had not that degree of assurance which John knew they might have, and hence he wrote to them that he might help them to attain unto that assurance. It was their privilege to know that they were Christians and that they were already in possession of the beginnings of a life which should last to all eternity. Hence he wrote to them and called their attention to the tests and means by which they might cease to

have doubt on so important a matter. These same things should prove of service to Christians of all ages and of all lands in enabling them to know that they have eternal life. By things written in this Word and by effects of grace upon the heart, by the Word, and by the Spirit, all may know when they are in a state of grace and when they are heirs of the blessings of eternal life. That such an assurance is attainable is evident from the fact that we are commanded to seek it. When God issues a command it is our duty to obey. If we seek to obey, we may expect that along with the command will come the strength to obey. The man with the withered hand had no power in himself to stretch forth his hand, but Christ gave the command, and along with the command the ability to obey. The command was to the man a pledge that in obeying the blessing of renewed health would come to him — that the Savior would not mock his infirmity, but would bestow upon him the ability to obey. Hence when he sought to obey, he found the strength to obey. He stretched forth his hand whole as the other. So a command from God is frequently a pledge from God of a blessing He is about to bestow. When we find God directing His people to seek to know their spiritual state before Him, we may expect Him to crown the effort with success. Listen to Him as He bids you, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." (II Corinthians 13:5.) "Give diligence to make your calling

and election sure." (II Peter 1:10.) Examine and prove yourselves by the application of the Scriptural tests, that you may know that you have been called of the Spirit and that you have accepted that call and so are in a state of grace, that you are in the faith and that you are assured of your calling and election of God, "chosen in Him unto salvation." In other words, God had expressly laid upon you the duty of seeking to know that you are numbered among His people and that you are heirs of eternal life. God would not hold up for your acceptance such blessings and privileges unless it were His will to bestow them in answer to earnest prayer and seeking. "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you." Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." (Amos 6:3.) If you will seek to know God and to hold communion with Him, you will learn to know Him better and better, and you will receive fuller and fuller manifestations of His presence and blessing until there will spring up within your heart that filial spirit whereby you will be able to say, "Abba," Father.

The fact that God has given in His Word tests by which you may try your spiritual condition before Him is an evidence that you may find out whether you are in the faith. One of these tests is love to God. He describes the natural, unrenewed mind as enmity to God and as not subject to His law. If, therefore, love for God has sprung up in the heart, it must be because that heart has

been changed. Hence it is written, "Everyone that loveth is born of God," and "We love Him because He first loved us." If there be love in your heart for God, you have passed from death unto life, you are a child of God and an heir of heaven.

Love to our fellow Christians is another test of our being in a state of grace. It is written, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." (I John 3:14.) As children of the same family are bound to each other by ties of natural affection, so children of God are bound to each other by spiritual ties, strong and tender. They love each other according as they recognize in each other the image of their heavenly Father. They are bound to each other as those who have been redeemed by the same Savior, as those contending against the same spiritual enemies, as those enlisted in the same great cause, journeying towards the same heavenly home, and loving and serving the same great King. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:35.)

Still another test by which we may decide whether we are true disciples of Christ is love for the Word of God. This Word is a revelation of the will and character of God. If we love God, we will love His Word. If we love His people, we will love the messages which He sends to them. If we love His Son, we will love the Word which

testifies of that Son. Here are treasured up the precious promises which God hath given to His people. Here is revealed to them Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Here are set forth the privileges and duties of the children of God, and here are described the blessings which are in store for them in heaven. Here are recorded the letters from the heavenly Father to His children. No wonder, then, that love of God's Word has ever been a mark of the children of God. The inspired Psalmist sings the praises of the Word of God and declares his love for it in glowing terms. "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey comb."

Love for the ordinances of God's house will likewise be felt by every true child of God. David said: "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go up unto the house of the Lord.' I would rather be a door keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of the wicked." It is here that God has promised His special presence and blessing. It is here He meets with His people and pours out richly His blessings. It is here His Word is read and explained. It is here His praise is sung. It is here we bow before His

throne in prayer. It is here — in the sacraments — that Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed and applied to believers. It is here they hold communion with God and with each other. If you love the ordinances of God's house, you have an evidence that you are under the influence of the love of the God whom you worship in His sanctuary.

The fruits of the Spirit will evince the life of God in the soul. These are given as "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Galatians 5:22.) These do not spring up in the human heart spontaneously. Their presence is an evidence of spiritual life and grace. The good seed has fallen into the heart, and God's Spirit has blessed it and caused it to yield spiritual fruit. The presence of this fruit is the proof and evidence of the new life that is there.

Men may judge of their spiritual state by the general tenor of their lives. Not only are there fruits of the Spirit in the heart, but in the daily life of every true believer. The rule laid down by the Savior was this: "By their fruits shall ye know them." "Ye are my disciples if ye do whatsoever I command you." Faith in the soul "works by love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world." While no merely human life is perfect, yet every human life into which has been introduced the principle of grace will manifest the presence of that grace by outward conduct. Men

will take knowledge of such as give evidence of the presence of grace in the heart by their outward lives, that they have been with the Lord. They will know that they have walked with Jesus till they have caught His spirit and learned to strive day by day to imitate His example.

Then, too, the Holy Spirit will bear witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. There will be such an influence exerted by the Spirit over our hearts that there will spring up there a filial spirit — a spirit similar to that which a child feels toward his own father — so that we can look up with love and faith in God and claim and call Him our Father. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are children of God." "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs of Christ," "to that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" for all them that love Him.

There are numerous Scriptural examples of those who came to enjoy this full assurance as to their acceptance with God. David said, "I shall behold Thy face in righteousness." Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Paul said, "I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." And John wrote, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the Son of God that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

When we are directed to seek this assurance, when tests are laid down by which we may decide whether we be in the faith, and when examples are set before us for our imitation in seeking and finding this blessing, there is left no reasonable ground for doubt as to whether this assurance can be attained. Such assurance is certainly desirable for our comfort and usefulness. We should wish to be sure that we are on the way to heaven. We should be sure that we have trusted in the only foundation that will stand in the day of storm. We should be sure that Christ is our friend and that He will be our advocate in the final day of trial. We should all desire to read our titles clear to mansions in the sky. If desirable and attainable, then it should be sought earnestly and perseveringly. Why should we go mourning all of our days when we might be rejoicing in the Lord continually? Why should we not rejoice and be glad if we have the assurance that we are the children of the heavenly King? If we have not such an assurance, should we not seek it with all earnestness and zeal? We should seek for it as the lost man seeks for the way, as the condemned man for pardon, as the sick man for health, and as the poor man seeks wealth. We should seek it before all earthly blessings and privileges. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and all else needful shall be added.

CHAPTER XXV

PERSEVERANCE

If it be important to know that you are a child of God, it is no less important to be sure that you will continue to be a member of the family of God until you come into possession of the inheritance He hath promised to His children. If it be essential to your joy and comfort to know that you have begun the journey that leadeth unto life eternal, it is no less necessary that you have a good assurance that you shall, at last, arrive in the celestial city. There are some who hold that you can never know whether you will reach heaven until you are there, and who hurl anathemas at those who deny that God's children may be lost on the way. God's Word must decide here, as elsewhere, as to the truth on this subject. It seems clearly to teach that "they who have been really called into the kingdom and regenerated by the Spirit can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved." (Question 79, L. C.) This does not mean that real Christians may not fall into sin and become guilty of backsliding, for the mournful examples

from David to Peter and from Peter to this day, clearly prove that Christians may and do thus sin. Nor does it mean that some who unite with the Church do not go back to sin and the world and are finally lost, for we are expressly taught that there are those who go out from among God's people because they are not of them, and who go like Judas to their own place because like him they were devils from the beginning. What is meant is that real Christians, those in whose hearts God hath begun the work of grace, though they may become guilty of sins and inconsistencies, yet they will never totally and finally apostatize and be lost, but that they will turn from their sins and, like David and Peter, have the work of grace carried on in their hearts till they come at last into the full enjoyment of the blessings of heaven.

What are the Scriptural evidences of this precious truth? The purpose of God on this subject is so clear and definite that it is difficult to understand how there can be any doubt on this subject in the minds of those who believe the Bible. Christ says, "My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me, and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." (John 10:27-29.) "And this is the Father's will that hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I shall lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." (John 6:39-40.) "All that the Father hath given Me shall come to Me; and him

that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37.) Could language be stronger, clearer or more explicit? It is the will of the Father that all the Father hath given the Son shall come to Him, and of the Son that "him that cometh unto Him He would in no wise cast out," and of the Father and Son that of all that vast number given to Him and coming to Him, He should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28.) This is the revelation of the will of God concerning those given to Christ, those coming to Christ and those called according to His purpose. Unless, therefore, God's purpose should fail, all true Christians must be brought at last into His kingdom of glory.

The change wrought in man's character is so thorough that we might expect it to be permanent. So complete and radical is this change that it is compared to a new birth, a creation, a resurrection. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven." "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, and hath raised you up and made you to sit together in heavenly places." When God exercises on man's behalf power that can be expressed only by comparing it to that wrought in creation, birth and resurrection, the presumption is that He will accomplish and bring to completion that which He

hath undertaken. Until his nature hath undergone that radical change by which man is begotten in the likeness of God, he cannot be recognized as a child of God. But when this change has once been wrought by the divine Spirit, then man is brought into the spiritual family of God and made an heir of God. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Unless man be created anew by some supernatural power, he can never see and enjoy the blessings of the kingdom of God. But when he is so recreated in Christ Jesus, he has given unto him a nature which will qualify him for entrance into that kingdom of holiness.

Unless man be raised up from his death in sin, he must forever remain under its power; but when, by the grace of a divine Savior, the power of spiritual death hath been broken, man can walk in newness of life and come at last to enjoy fulness of life in heaven. The gospel provides for just such a resurrection and just such a creation. In the second chapter of Ephesians it is written: "God, who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness to us through Jesus Christ." When a man is introduced into the

kingdom of God by a new birth, a new creation and a resurrection from the dead, the change must be so mighty and so radical that there will be good ground to believe that it will be permanent — that Christ is formed in him the hope of glory. "He that hath begun a good work in you will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ." The agent who works this change is so mighty and so wise and so good that we may rest assured that He will bring to completion that which He hath undertaken. He is none other than the divine Spirit. He is the almighty Being who brooded over the waters when our world was a chaos and brought order out of confusion. He is that almighty Being by whose power all souls were created. He is that all-powerful Being by whom Christ was raised from the dead. He it is who has undertaken this great work in behalf of each believer, and none are so strong and malignant as to be able to thwart His plan and purpose.

The atonement of Christ was so perfect and complete that all who trust in Christ will surely be owned and acquitted in the final day of trial. As they were fully and freely pardoned and accepted when they first came to Christ, confessing their sins and pleading His merit, so in the day of judgment, when He, as their advocate, pleads their cause, confessing their sin and pointing to His suffering and death in their behalf, they will be openly owned and acquitted and welcomed into all of the privileges and honors of the kingdom

of God. When the King's own Son pleads, the King will surely hear and answer the pleading. It was He who placed Himself in man's stead, to do and suffer all that the law and justice of God required. He obeyed that law perfectly. He paid its penalty fully. He encountered and conquered all of the enemies to man's salvation. He overcame guilt and sin and Satan and death. "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." He passed through death, and ever lives to make intercession for us at His Father's right hand and "Him the Father heareth always!" As our great high priest He laid the offering upon the altar when He gave Himself for us; and as our great high priest He hath entered within the veil, there to plead our cause. Who can doubt the result of His intercession. He is thoroughly acquainted with the will of the Father. He knows perfectly all of the guilt and sin of man. He has a perfect acquaintance with all of the requirements of the law. These He has already met fully and completely, and as an evidence of this has been released from the death He was paying in man's behalf and has been welcomed back to His place of honor and power at His Father's right hand in heaven. From that lofty throne He points to all He did and suffered for man, and asks of the Father in these words: "Father,

I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which I had with Thee from the beginning, for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." In order to this, he prays that they may be kept from the evil, that they may be sanctified through the truth, that they may be made one, and that then they may be brought to Himself in glory. The hope of persevering in grace is based not upon the fickle, sinful and imperfect heart of man, but upon the unchangeable purpose of God the Father, upon the mighty change wrought upon the dispositions of the soul by God the Spirit, and upon the perfect and infinite atonement and ever-prevalent intercession of God the Son. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost unite their infinite wisdom and goodness with their almighty power in the work of bringing many redeemed sinners unto glory. Who shall thwart that purpose? Who shall keep out of heaven the soul whom God calls, renews, guides, keeps, and saves from sin and death and hell? "What shall we say to those things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is

even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress or persecution, or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? Nay, in all of these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:31-39.)

What a comfort should this teaching be to the hearts of all of God's children! Amid all of the trials and sorrows and temptations of this life, the Christian may confidently look for deliverance and victory. In the storms of life he can hear the voice of that Savior who stilled the tempest saying unto him, "Be not afraid; it is I." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

What a cause of thanksgiving and praise to the God of our salvation! We were sinful and helpless and lost. He loved us and sent His son to seek and save the lost. The Son loved us and "gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Out of love to God we should praise Him and serve Him all

of the days of our lives. The love of Christ should constrain us not to live unto ourselves, but unto Christ who died for us and rose again, and who "ever liveth to make intercession" for us.

CHAPTER XXVI

DEATH

There are many things about death we cannot know till we pass through it. But there are some things concerning it that are clearly taught in the Word of God. One of the things about death which is taught, alike by experience and the Bible, is that we must die. Each of us may say with Job, "I know that Thou wilt bring me to death and to the house appointed for all living."

The death referred to by Job is the separation of the soul from the body, which we call physical death. It is the cessation or suspension of the union that has existed between the spirit and the body. It is the death that brings us to the grave, "the house appointed for all living." It should be a matter of interest to everyone to enquire, "What does the Bible teach us in regard to death?" For one thing, the Scriptures remind us frequently that death is an event which must come to all. "It is appointed unto men to die." "It is the house appointed for all living." The appointment is made for men in general, for the entire race, for men always and every where. The house appointed is "for all living." The

appointment is of God, and hence none can escape it except as He may will, for who can resist His power? It is true that in the past two or three were translated that they should not see death, and that God has promised to change the bodies of the saints which remain on earth at the coming of the Savior, that they may be made like the glorified body of Christ, but apart from these exceptions we have no reason to expect that a single member of our entire race shall escape death.

Death — like Him who appointed it — is "no respecter of persons." It comes alike to all classes and conditions of men. It takes the infant from the mother's arms. It cuts down the strong young man and the fair young maiden. It calls the middle-aged man from the activities of business life and from the care of his family. It permits the aged man to lay down his long borne burden and rest with his fathers in the grave. All classes — the young and the old, the weak and the strong, the wise and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the prepared and the unprepared, the believer and the unbeliever — must at last answer the summons that calls them to the pale realms of death. All must leave the things of this world and come at last to "the house appointed for all living."

Another teaching of the Bible is that death is the result of sin. Had there been no sin, there would have been no death. But for sin, there

would have been no sickness, nor suffering, nor pain, nor separation of soul and body in the agonies of physical death. Death does not come to man by any arbitrary appointment of God, but as a judgment for sin. Man by sinning brings upon himself the penalty of his own disobedience. The Judge declares him to be guilty of death because of his sin. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." (Romans 5:12.) The law was broken, and the penalty has fallen on man because he disregarded the warning, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Our great representative was clearly taught that the legal and moral status which he, by his obedience or disobedience, should secure for himself, he would likewise secure for all of his posterity. If he should obey, he would be confirmed in holiness, and he and they should continue to enjoy the blessings of God's children to all eternity; but that if he disobeyed, he should forfeit all right and title to the favor of God and bring himself and his descendants into sin and misery. He chose the way of sin and so must suffer its penalty. Did he bring himself under the penalty by his sin and disobedience? So did he bring his children. Did he lose from his soul the image of God? So did he bring it to pass that not one of all of his descendants should be born in the image of God, but that they should all come into the

world with his sinful likeness. Did he become a child of wrath through sin? So did they, for "we are all children of wrath." Did he become subject to all of the evils of this life, to death itself and all of the pains of hell forever? So did they. Sin, then, it is that hath wrought the ruin of man. Sin brings death and all of our woes. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." "The wages of sin is death."

Even God's people are required to go up to the privileges of the redeemed through the gateway of death. It is true that Christ hath purchased for them deliverance from the curse of the law, and a title to life eternal, yet, according to the terms of the covenant, believers are required to pass through death to the life eternal. God might have translated them at once to heaven, but for wise reasons He does not do this, but requires them to pass through a greatly modified death — a death from which the sting of sin hath been extracted, a death which has been changed from a curse into a means of chastisement and a death which has been robbed largely of its terrors by the fact that Christ gained the victory over it and sanctified it for the service of those who put their trust in Him by making it a means of grace to them while here and a means of entrance into glory when they are called away from here. Still it is true that even God's children would have never known death had they never known sin. They must follow Him who tasted death for them

through the grave up to the glory which He hath in store for them.

Again, we are clearly taught that the soul of man will continue to live in a conscious, active state, after the separation from the body. Many of the greatest minds of the past have regarded even the rational arguments for the immortality of the soul sufficient to beget a very strong probability of the soul's continued existence after death. The Bible testimony on this subject makes it certain to all who receive its authority that man's soul will survive the shock of death, and live and know beyond the grave. The people of all races and lands and times have believed in the immortality of the soul, and there must, therefore, be some solid foundation upon which so universal a hope must rest. God either taught their ancestors this great truth and they handed it down, or else he bestows upon each soul the power to entertain this hope.

Philosophers teach that not a particle of matter can be destroyed. You can change its form and the combination of its elements, but you cannot cause them to cease to exist. You can burn a stick of wood, but if you could gather up all of the smoke and water and ash that came from it you would find that nothing had been destroyed but the combination of particles. How much more, then, have we the right to infer the indestructibility of the spiritual part of man, which is one and indivisible.

The soul has powers and capacities capable of indefinite development and improvement, and should have a sphere and opportunity for such development. As a profound thinker once said, "God has ordained that all things shall fulfill the ends for which they exist." Now two ends for which man exists are that he may develop to their highest degree all of his powers and faculties, and that he should glorify the God who made him. Life is too short and circumscribed to fulfill these ends satisfactorily, and hence there must be some future state in which the work begun here may be completed. If you see a man planting a great number of fruit trees close together in a small place, you conclude from your knowledge of the nature of the trees that they are to be transplanted to a larger place where they shall have opportunity to grow and develop and bear fruit. The soul of man is the scion, in the nursery here on earth, which is to be transplanted to the garden of God in the eternal world, that there it may have time and opportunity to grow and develop and bear fruit to the glory of God who made it.

Conscience points forward to a time and a Person before whom an account must be rendered of all the deeds done in the body. Horace, the poet, said that "fear made the gods," but one wiser than Horace said, "But who made fear?" Why should man fear the result of his conduct in the future if there be no future? And why fear if there be no law and no Judge and no day of reck-

oning? Surely these premonitions are the voice of God, whispering in our souls and prophesying the future day of retribution, when we shall be required to give an account of the deeds done in the body.

Then, too, the unequal distribution of rewards and punishments in this world leads us to expect another world in which all of the inequalities of justice shall be made even. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Would it be right to let the wicked go unpunished forever? Would it be right for the innocent to continue to suffer and the robber and the murderer to escape the punishment due his sin? It must be that at some time in the future all men must stand before the judgment seat of God, that they may receive at His hands according to their deeds. Justice demands what conscience tells men he should fear.

When we turn to the Bible, the light is clear and distinct. Job, who lived long before the Light of the world came in human form, said: "I know that my Redeemer liveth and that He shall stand at the latter day on the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall see, and not another." Later on, Christ brought life and immortality to light, and declared in plain terms, and emphatic as plain, when He was about to leave this world by the gateway of death, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and pre-

pare a place for you, I will come again, that where I am, there may ye be also." "Because I live, ye shall live also." "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Taught by the inspiration of God, Paul wrote, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Romans 8:11.) In the closing verses of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew Christ represents the wicked as going away into "everlasting punishment," and the righteous into "life eternal." The souls, both of the righteous and of the unrighteous, are there represented as continuing in conscious existence throughout all eternity.

We are authorized to believe that the souls of believers are at death made perfect in holiness and that they do then pass immediately into glory. It is written, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," and it is said that "nothing that defileth or maketh unclean shall enter therein." God would not receive the unholy into companionship with Himself, and they would not be prepared to enjoy the blessings of the holy abode of God. And yet the Savior promised to the penitent thief that that very day he should be with Him in Paradise. Paul said, "To be away from the body is to be at home with the Lord." And the apostle John wrote, "I heard a voice from heaven say, 'Write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the

Lord from henceforth that they may rest from their labor; and their works do follow them." " And when he saw the multitude of the redeemed in heaven and asked, " Who are these and whence came they? " the answer came back, " These are they that have come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Evidently, therefore, to prepare His people for the new sphere into which they are represented as being introduced at the moment of death, they are made perfectly holy and then welcomed into Paradise, the third or highest heaven. Thus shall they be satisfied when they awake with His likeness and are called into His presence with exceeding great joy.

On the other hand, the souls of the wicked pass at once to the prison house of Satan and his angels. Christ warned men that if they would not believe on Him, they should die in their sins and go into the outer darkness where there should be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. He says expressly that Judas, who was a devil from the beginning, " went to his own place "; and of all the finally impenitent He says, " These shall go away into everlasting punishment." In that dark abode they are in full possession of all of their faculties. He bids the rich man to remember that he in his lifetime had his good things while Lazarus had evil things, but that now he was tormented while Lazarus was comforted.

Still further, the Bible teaches us that this sep-

aration between the righteous and the wicked is the result of the character and conduct of men in this life. It is a great law in the spiritual world that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; and he that soweth to the spirit shall of the Spirit reap life eternal." In the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew Christ points out the two classes into which men divide themselves — the wise and the foolish virgins; they who improved their talents and they who improved them not; they who ministered to His representatives and they who neglected to do so. Then He adds those fearful words, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." According to the sides they espoused, and according to their faith or lack of faith as shown by their lives, should be their destiny.

This allotment to everlasting death and to life eternal is to take place immediately after death and is to be fixed, final and eternal. It was "*this day* thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." It was "from henceforth" that the righteous were to be blessed. To die is to be with Christ for the righteous. To go to their own place will be the end of all who, like Judas, betray the Master or refuse to put their trust in Him as the only Savior from sin. "I said, therefore, unto you, 'Ye shall die in your sins.' For if ye believe not on Me, ye shall die in your sins." To die in one's sins is

to sink into the abode of the sinful and the lost. To all such as reject finally the offer of the Savior to redeem them, He says, "Whither I go ye cannot come." To them He says as to Dives, "Besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot. Neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." (Luke 16:26.) That is a fearful verdict the Lord sends back from heaven concerning the estate of men in the hour of death and judgment. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." (Revelations 22:11.) They will then have reached a period in their moral history when their destiny shall be fixed and unalterable. They will sink or ascend according to the characters they have acquired. They will gravitate toward their own place — to a home in heaven or to a prison house in hell.

Trust not to a promise of future repentance nor to a second probation. Christ said concerning those who demanded signs and visions in His day, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." So it may be said concerning those who demand a chance beyond the grave, if they will not believe the gospel and trust in Christ now, neither will they believe and repent then.

Now the gospel invites them to all of the blessings of salvation. Now the "Spirit and the bride say 'Come.' And let him that heareth say 'Come.' And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." There no gospel will be proclaimed. There the Spirit will cease to strive with man, and there no Christian friend can give the invitation. "Behold, now is the accepted time. Behold, now is the day of salvation."

Prepare during this day for the night of death and for the awful realities of eternity. Do you ask how this preparation can be made and in what it consists? Repent of your sins and turn unto the Lord and He will have mercy on you and abundantly pardon you. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved." He will clothe you with the robe of His perfect righteousness so that you may be a welcomed guest at the marriage feast. By careful, prayerful, earnest, consecrated living, seek constantly to show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into light. Keep your lamp trimmed and burning, and the oil of His grace in your heart, that you may be ready when your Lord cometh that you may meet Him in joy and that He may say to you and to the thousands who love and serve Him, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Thus will you be

ready to say with Job, "I know that Thou wilt bring me to death and to the house appointed for all living," and with David, "Thou wilt guide me with Thy counsel and afterwards receive me into glory."

CHAPTER XXVII

THE RESURRECTION

When we stand on the shores of time and see our friends pass out into eternity through the gateway of death, the Bible is the only book that can give us any comfort and consolation concerning their state and condition. It alone gives us clear and definite knowledge concerning the immortality of the soul, and it alone teaches us to expect a bodily resurrection. Christ brought life and immortality to light. He proclaimed Himself to be the "Resurrection and the Life," and promised to raise up all those who put their trust in Him. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

The heathen nations had almost no idea of the resurrection of the body. The Egyptians held that, if they could preserve the body, the spirit might come again and reinhabit its old home; but if the body should crumble to dust, the spirit must either wander on and on forever or enter the body of some lower animal and find there a home in which it would live and suffer. The resurrection is altogether a revelation from God. It is a

precious revelation to a believer because he is authorized by it to hope for the resurrection of his own body and the resurrection of the bodies of his friends and kindred. He may then see again the loved forms of friends who went away, trusting in the Lord years ago. Hence the comfort which the apostle points out concerning those who die believing in the Lord. "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." Hence, also, the words of Jesus, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they which have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation." (John 5:28-29.)

We should seek to understand the teaching of the Word concerning the resurrection of the dead. It is plain that we are taught in the Bible that the very same bodies from which our souls are separated at death will be raised again from the dead. This does not mean that every particle of matter that now constitutes these bodies shall be included in the resurrection, but only such a part of the body, whether particle or germ, as shall be necessary to constitute them the same bodies in a true and literal sense. No one has ever yet been able to define very clearly bodily identity, and yet of

the fact of such identity there can be no doubt. It certainly cannot consist in the continued association and relation of all of the particles of the body, for these are constantly changing, being lost and renewed in the wear and growth of the body. We are told by physicians that the particles of our bodies change every few years, that a man at twenty-one has not a particle of matter in his body that made up that body when he was born, and yet no one has a doubt but that his identity has been maintained during all of these years. He is conscious that his material home, his body, with its limbs and members, has continued to be associated with and related to his soul, and that while there have been many changes in the body, yet it has remained substantially the same. So, though our bodies should be greatly changed in the passage through death, there will be a real sense in which they will be recognized as the very same bodies our souls inhabited before death. The same almighty God who first formed the body of man is certainly capable of reforming it in such a way as to maintain its identity and yet so change it as to fit it for the new sphere in which it is to live after the morning of the resurrection. Hence the language used with reference to the resurrected body plainly identifies it with the body in which we now live and have our being. "It"— the body —"is sown in weakness." "It"— the same body —"is raised in power." Christ would not be the redeemer of our bodies

unless He redeemed from sin and death the very bodies which have been marked and marred by sin. Christ's resurrection is a type of ours, for it is called "the *earnest*" of ours. As His was literal, and as His very body was raised from the dead and was seen and recognized by His friends, so will our very bodies be raised and be seen and known by those who knew us before death. Hence we are expressly taught that our bodies are to be raised up and "are to be made *like unto Christ's glorious body.*"

The change which takes place in the body thus raised to life will be such as to prepare it for the abode of the soul cleansed from all sin, and for the new surroundings into which it is to be introduced. The model after which the bodies of believers are to be fashioned will be the glorified body of Christ. That, though the same was greatly changed so that it was not at once recognized, being noticed carefully, was seen to be the very body of the Savior. When Mary came to the tomb seeking for Jesus, the record shows that when she had looked into the sepulcher and found that his body was not there, she turned back and saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus till He called her by name. "Jesus said unto her, 'Mary'; she saith unto Him 'Rabboni — Master.'" The familiar voice, the gracious manner, revealed to her the Lord, her Friend and Savior. The two disciples on their way to Emmaus were joined by Jesus who talked to them

and asked them questions, but they did not at first recognize Him. But when He sat down to eat with them, He was made known to them "in the breaking of bread." There was something in His manner and bearing, in His voice and gesture, which revealed Him through the change that had come over Him. Christ's transfiguration was a prophecy of what His body should be when raised from the dead. At that time, "His face did shine as the sun and His raiment was white as the light"; so in the resurrection day Christ's body shall be glorious and the bodies of all of His people shall be like His in glory and beauty. His body was so glorified that it was not easily and immediately recognized by those who had known Him, and yet so alike that it was seen to be the same when the first surprise was over and when opportunity was given to examine its features; so will it be when we meet the redeemed whom we have known on earth. They may be as superior in body as the diamond is to the charcoal, and so may not be recognized at a glance, but they will be so the same that we shall know them by some appearance or trait or feature which they bore when upon earth. At the Laymen's Convention in Birmingham I met a classmate whom I knew and loved in College but whom I had not seen since we were boys. At first I did not know him, so great was the change which had come over him, and yet when I looked more carefully I saw in his eyes and form and bearing much to reveal him as

the same friend I had known so well in the past. "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory." It dies with the marks of sin upon it; it rises with the image of holiness upon it. The gloom of sin rested upon the countenance here; the glory of holiness will crown it there. As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. The resurrection body is to be "incorruptible." In its natural state it was liable to dissolution and death, but in its spiritual condition it shall be no longer liable to the power of death. "There shall be no more death," for "it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption."

The resurrection body shall be vigorous and full of strength. Here the body is weak and liable to grow weary. Here it is frail and not immune from sickness. There the weary are at rest. There "the inhabitant shall no more say 'I am sick.'" There fresh and immortal vigor shall mark the bodies of the redeemed, for it is written, "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power."

Still further, it shall be "spiritual." Here it is an animal body, moved and largely influenced by animal feelings and instincts, and these largely controlled and directed by a sinful nature "so that when we would do good, evil is present with us." There it will be a spiritual body, a body spiritualized, a body occupied and actuated by the spirit of man under the guidance and influence of the Spirit of God. Even here the body

of the believer is spoken of as "the temple of the Holy Ghost," but sin still dwells in that temple and mars its beauty and introduces discord into its worship; but after death the Holy Spirit will assume full sway and control of His temple and every thought and feeling and desire of the soul shall be under the perfect and sweet influence of the Spirit of God.

Concerning the condition of the bodies of the wicked after death little is said in the Word of God. Since they refused to accept God's provision for cleansing their souls and glorifying their bodies, they must be left under the degrading, deforming influence of sin. They must "awake to shame and everlasting contempt." They must be given up to the evil influences of sin and Satan. They must "go away into everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels." Having rejected Christ and made allegiance with Satan, they must share his fate.

The Scriptural reasons which have led to a firm belief in the resurrection of the dead are many and strong. Such a resurrection is necessary to the complete victory of Christ over sin and Satan. Satan led man into sin and sin brought upon man death — death bodily, death spiritual, death eternal. Christ undertook to rescue and deliver man from sin and death and Satan. He undertook this work for the whole man, for the body as well as for the soul. He must, therefore, defeat Satan, destroy his work and redeem both soul and

body from the power and dominion of sin and from the pains of death. Hence it was that He engaged in the contest with Satan and defeated him. Hence it was He cast out demons. Hence it was that " He died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God." Hence it was He went down into the grave and burst the bands of death and ascended to glory, " leading captivity captive and receiving gifts for men." Hence He came " that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all of their lifetime subject to bondage." (Hebrews 2: 14-15.)

Such a resurrection is necessary to complete the salvation of man. To save the soul is important and will be glorious, but man's redemption can never be complete, nor Christ's work finished, till the bodies of all them that put their trust in Him shall have been rescued from the grave, raised up and made like to His own glorious resurrection body.

Justice demands that the bodies of the wicked be raised up that they may receive " according to the things done in the body "; and that the bodies of the redeemed be raised up that they may receive in the body the rewards purchased for them by the sufferings which Christ endured in His own body upon the cross. Christ's own resurrection is given as a token and a pledge of the resur-

rection of all them that put their trust in Him. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "If the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His spirit that dwelleth in you." (Romans 8:11.)

Then we have the express statements of the Word of God to confirm our hope and strengthen our faith. Some of these have just been quoted, and others are so familiar that they will readily occur to your minds. Christ declared Himself to be the "Resurrection and the Life," and said expressly, "This is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which seeth the Son and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:40.) "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'" "Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." What a comfort to God's people, both concerning their own resurrection and concerning that of their friends and kindred who have departed to be with Christ! They shall meet and know them after the resurrection day. With them they shall walk and talk and worship and serve the Redeemer forever and forever.

With what zeal and earnestness should all seek

to have a part in the resurrection of the just? "Set your house in order." Seek an interest in Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life," and who hath promised to raise up everyone who puts his trust in him.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT

There was once a man arraigned before the Court of the Inquisition. He was told that it would be best for him to make a full and unreserved confession of all he had said and done. He began, but when he heard the sound of a pen running rapidly over paper behind a curtain that hung near, he became silent, for he knew that his words were being taken down that they might be used against him in the future. With far greater fairness and justice God forewarns us that a record is being made of our thoughts and words and deeds, and that we must face that record at the judgment of the great day, for "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained."

The day. There is, then, to be a day of judgment. Some have wondered why there should be a general judgment when it is clearly the teaching of the Bible that each man's destiny is practically decided when he dies — that then he goes at once to the place to which his sins doom him or to the place to which the Savior has purchased

for him a title. Such a judgment would not be necessary for God, for He knows from the beginning all of the sins of the lost and all of those claimed by Christ as the purchase of His suffering and death. He will deal with perfect justice in all of the sentences which He passes, whether at death or in the final day of judgment.

While we may not be able to know all of the reasons why such a judgment is necessary, there are some good reasons that must occur to every thoughtful student of the Word and of human life. The expectation of such a day will stimulate men to live in a proper manner and to prepare for the account which they must at last render before God. If men know that all of their thoughts and words and deeds will one day be made known to those for whom he hath the highest regard, how careful will he be that these thoughts and feelings and words and deeds be of such a character that he will not be ashamed of them. He will strive to think pure thoughts, to speak true words and to do kind acts.

Such a judgment will also furnish an opportunity to reveal to men the ultimate fruits of their sins, and so reveal to them the perfect justice of God in their punishment or the greatness of His mercy in their pardon. No one is able to measure the full extent of the evil influence of even one sin when it is first committed. Here is a man who speaks a profane or an impure word in the presence of a child. There is the double evil influence

on the soul of the speaker and upon the soul of the child. These he cannot fully measure. But this is only the beginning. That child grows up with his character influenced and colored by that word he heard. It found a congenial soil in his sinful heart and will bear fruit in his life. He will repeat that or a similar word to others, and they to others, and thus that one wrong word may go on spreading its baneful influence long after the first and second speakers are dead and gone. Down to the end of time the evil fruit will be borne, and it can never be known till the end of time how great and how evil that fruitage will be. And so with each and every sin which a man commits during all the days of his life. In the light of eternity men shall see and understand far better than at death how great and how far reaching has been the ruin wrought by their sins and hence how just is God in the punishment He will inflict upon all of those out of Christ and how infinite the mercy of God in the gift of His Son to save from such sin. Thus will the general judgment silence the mouths of all cavilers and magnify the glory of God in the punishment of sinners and in the salvation of the righteous. It is clear, whether we can understand all of the reasons or not, that the Scriptures teach that there will be such a general judgment, both of the just and of the unjust. In Ecclesiastes it is written, "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good

or evil." (12:14.) In Acts 17:31 is recorded the passage already quoted: "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained." Christ, in speaking of that day in the Gospel of Matthew, says, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all of the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory; and before Him shall be gathered all nations." (Matthew 25:31, 32.) The apostle Paul says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." (II Corinthians 5:10.) And John, the beloved, writes: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged, every man according to their works." (Revelations 20:12-13.) There will then be this great and terrible day of the Lord when He shall try the hearts of all men. That will be a great day because of the character of the judge, because of the vast multitudes to be tried, because of the revelations which shall be made and because of the sentence passed. It will mark the end of time, and the final doom of man. It will be a day of separations, a day of sorrow and despair, and yet a day of triumph and joy.

The great day of judgment is coming at the time fixed and appointed by the Judge of all of the earth.

The Judge will be the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father hath appointed the day, but will give to His Son the honor of sitting as Judge. He is called " the Son of man " and " the Man ordained of God." In the gospel of John this remarkable language is used by Christ: " For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." (John 5:21-22.) It is becoming that Christ should have this honor. His attributes are such as to qualify Him for the office, and the work He hath done for the glory of His Father and for the salvation of man is such as to entitle Him to this public recognition before all the moral and spiritual world. His knowledge will enable Him to see and understand all of the sins and needs of those whom He is to judge. His holiness and justice are such that He will deal fairly and without any compromise with sin. His power is such that none can escape the awful realities of that day. And yet His mercy is such that He will deal kindly and tenderly in so far as this can be done without violence to the law and justice of Heaven.

He gave up heaven and endured the sorrows of earth, the contradiction of sinners and the suffering of death to maintain the honor of God and secure the salvation of man. " Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name

that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father." (Philippians 2:9-11.) It is becoming that He should be the Judge as a reward for all He had done and suffered in order to reëstablish the kingdom of righteousness and truth among men. Then, too, it is especially fitting that our mediator should be our judge. To stand before Jehovah in His naked spiritual being might so fill our hearts with terror and awe as to drive us away in dismay. But when we see the Judge, clothed in human form, and recognize Him as the very Savior who loved us and died and rose for us, we can the better stand before the judgment seat in that day. We shall be able to feel that He will represent our cause, and that through Him we shall be delivered from the wrath to come.

What a contrast there will be between His position at that day and the position He occupied when upon earth! Then He was in humility; now in glory. Then He was a prisoner before an earthly tribunal; now He sits to judge the quick and the dead. Then He was despised and rejected of men; now He is owned and confessed by a great multitude which no man can number. Then He was attended by a few humble followers; now all of the holy angels of heaven attend Him, while all of the redeemed of earth and all of the wicked men of earth and wicked angels of heaven stand before Him to receive at His hands the sen-

tence either of pardon and acceptance or of condemnation and death.

The persons to be judged then are all men and all the fallen angels who are said to be "reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day." The quick and the dead are to be there. "Before Him shall be gathered all nations." "The dead, small and great, shall stand before Him." "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation,"— all of all races and kindreds and tribes and people; all of all lands and countries; all of every rank and age and condition; all of all generations; not merely the fifteen hundred millions that now live, but all of the thousands of generations that have lived; all who have died on sea or land; all who have died in war and in peace; all who have been cut down by pestilence or famine or sword. The old and the young, the rich and the poor, the wise and the unwise, the prepared and the unprepared, the wicked and the righteous — all — all — every one of our race — shall be there.

This judgment, while universal, will also be particular and individual. "So, then, *everyone* of us shall give account of himself unto God." No man can answer for another in that day except as Christ answers for His people. The father cannot answer for the son, nor the son for

the father. The husband cannot answer for the wife, nor the wife for the husband. Friend cannot answer for friend, nor neighbor for neighbor. "Every one of us must give account of himself to God."

Of what shall we be judged? *Of every thought of our minds*, of every feeling of our hearts, of every word of our mouths and every deed of our lives. This is a great teaching of God's Word, corresponding with the wonderful teaching of conscience. That which conscience whispered, the Word loudly proclaims. That which man secretly feared, the Word plainly declares. "God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

The thoughts and intents of our hearts are the sources from which spring our actions, for "as a man thinketh, so is he!" God sees these as the germs from which grow our actions. The botanist by his glass and by his knowledge can see in the seed the entire plant, root, stalk, leaf and branch; so does God see the full action in the thought of the mind and in the desire of the heart. *For the words we speak*, yea, for "every idle word shall we account in the day of judgment." Words have power and influence, and words once spoken have wings that carry them so fast and so far that we can never overtake them nor ever recall them. For every idle word, for every unkind word, for every untrue word and for every im-

pure word we shall have to give an account in the day of judgment. *For all the deeds done* in the body must men give account in that final day of trial. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The good tree bringeth forth good fruit and the evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit, and we judge the tree by the fruit. So must man expect to be judged at the last day. For the deed itself, for its influence upon the person and for its influence upon others; for all of its evil in its committal and for all the evil influence it may work down to the end of time, must we answer.

For neglected opportunities and for omitted duties we must make answer at the bar of God. How many the golden opportunities that come to us along the way of life, and how many of them are neglected! And how great the sorrow and remorse which these neglected opportunities bring to the hearts of men. You have probably heard the incident related of John Randolph of Roanoke when he came to die. He is said to have asked some one to write for him on a card the word "remorse." When that was done he bade him write it again. When that was done he requested him to write it a third time. When that wish was complied with he took the card in his thin, trembling fingers and said aloud, "Remorse! Remorse! Remorse!"— sorrow for unimproved, neglected opportunities. He was a man of wonderful intellect and had enjoyed unusual advantages and might have wielded untold influence for

good, but he felt that he had failed to seize and improve them and therefore sorrow and remorse filled his heart and made bitter his last moments on earth. You will recall the test which our Savior represents Himself as applying at the judgment day. "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it not unto Me." The failure to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, to entertain the stranger, clothe the naked and visit the sick and imprisoned was an evidence that they did not have love in their hearts to God and man, and so He must deny them entrance into a kingdom which required trust of Christ and love to God and man as the qualifications for admission. This was a test that could be applied alike by the rich and the poor. Those who have very little of this world's goods can divide their bread with the poor, give a cup of cold water to a fellow disciple for the sake of Him who, though He was rich yet, for our sakes became poor that we, through His poverty, might become rich. Even the poor can visit the sick and the prisoner, and share his shelter with his fellow traveller to the bar of God. It was the virgins who took no oil, the man who did no trading with his talent, and the persons who did no act of kindness to the poor and needy who were to be condemned as lost at the last great day; and it was the virgins who took oil in their lamps, the men who improved their talents, and the persons who ministered to the poor and needy in

Christ's name, who were welcomed into the rest that remaineth to the people of God.

The rule by which they shall be judged is the will of God as made known to man. " The books " which contain this will shall be opened. In human courts there are statute books containing the law which are opened and read for the guidance of the judge and jury. So God's law will be appealed to to justify all of His decisions. The book of conscience will be opened. God hath written His law upon the hearts and consciences of man so that they can be appealed to to show cause why sentence should be passed upon those who have violated the dictates of this inward law. The soul's judgment as to the moral character of its own actions will support the judgment of God Himself, for conscience is the voice of God, distinguishing between the right and the wrong and pointing forward to the final judgment of God to be passed upon the moral action of man. The book of the revealed law will be opened and by its teaching shall all who have heard it be tried. The thought and feelings and conduct of such men shall be laid along side the ten commandments, and by these shall the works of such men be tried. The Book of the gospel shall be opened and by it shall be tried all who have ever heard its joyful sound. The neglect or refusal of God's plan of salvation shall shut up all way of escape to men who have been guilty of such sin and folly.

There shall be witnesses to testify against men

— their own consciences, the persons whom they have wronged and led into sin. Satan, who brought them by the ways of death and darkness, shall then arise with fiendish delight to testify that they have sinned in this way and in that, to this extent and to that. But whatever may be forgotten by conscience, by your fellow men, or even by Satan, shall be clearly brought to light when the book of God's remembrance shall be opened, for "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." In human courts the "record of a cause" is frequently sent up from a lower to a higher court. That record contains all of the facts and evidence. These are all laid before the court that the cause may be tried according to the law and evidence. So before the bar of God will be presented all of the evidence of the sin of man and he will be judged "out of the things which were written in the books according to his works." Then another book shall be opened, "which is the book of life." In that book are recorded the names of all who were given to Christ as a reward of His suffering and death — all who have been born of the Spirit; all who have received and rested upon Christ alone for salvation as He was offered to them in the gospel. If any are found whose names are not in the book of life, they are condemned; but all whose names are written there are welcomed into the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

This, then, will be the result of the judgment. To the one class it will bring the message of welcome into the blessings of the redeemed in heaven. To the other a sentence of "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Let sinners tremble in view of the judgment day, for "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" and to go away from the Savior into "the outer darkness where there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." Repent and turn to the Lord and "He will have mercy upon you, and unto our God, and He will abundantly pardon you."

Let the righteous stand in awe and sin not. Let them trust in Christ, their advocate, and He will plead their cause and secure their pardon and acquittal. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Romans 8:34.) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or a sword? . . . Nay, in all of these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CHAPTER XXIX

HEAVEN

If you were about to leave your present home and move to a new country you would feel a deep interest in the character of that country. Its climate, its products, its people, its laws and customs, its government and ruler would all be subjects of the deepest interest to you. Your interest in heaven, the place to which you expect, before long to go, should be none the less real and deep. Since the Bible is the only source of information we have concerning heaven, we should seek diligently to learn all it has to tell us about heaven.

It is clearly revealed to us that heaven is a *real place.* The Savior said, "I go to prepare a *place* for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." (John 14:2, 3.)

The place is where Christ, with human body and soul, dwells. It is the home into which all of His people are to be gathered at last. It is "the better country" which the faithful of all ages have sought. It is "the land of

promise" which we hope to reach when we pass over the river of death. It is the "inheritance" of the saints in light. It is the "paradise" of God, and the "kingdom" where is His throne and His glory. It is the dwelling place of God and holy angels and of all the redeemed of earth. Into this blessed abode He promises at last to welcome all of His people of all lands and all ages when He shall say to them: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Heaven is a *place of life and conscious activity.* It is a great mistake to suppose that death ends in an eternal sleep, or that heaven is a place of rest in the sense of ease, inactivity and laziness. The soul with all of its active powers and faculties passes into eternity without losing these. If death does not destroy the soul, then it does not impair the faculties of the soul, nor interfere with their activities. The mind must think, the heart must love, the will must act and the memory still recall the events that have passed away. Indeed, it is probable that the powers of the soul will be more active there than here. Here the weakness and weariness of the body hinder and interfere with the vigorous activity of the soul, but there it will be in a state where health and vigor will distinguish every inhabitant, for there shall be no more sickness nor pain. The blessings of heaven are all summed up in the expression "eternal life,"

but life implies activity, growth and development, and eternal life involves endless activity. Hence we find that the redeemed are represented as "praising God," "serving God," and as resting not day or night. Their rest is not that of ease and inactivity but of employment in which there is no weariness, but variety, congeniality, and absence of hindrances and interruptions. Love ever impels them in the constant and delightful service which they render unto Him who loved them and gave Himself for them.

Heaven is a holy place. It is written that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." It is said, "Nothing that defileth or maketh unclean shall enter therein," and it is promised to the believer that he shall be satisfied when he awakes with the likeness of his Lord, and the blood-bought throng in heaven are described as those "who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Heaven is a place of perfect harmony. There the prayer of Christ will be fully answered, "That they may be one as we are one." All causes of discord and division between God and man will have been banished and all will be united in the bonds of a perfect and endless union with Christ as the Head and His people as His body. They will all bear His likeness; all have His mind, and all seek His glory. Love will prompt them to engage heartily and unitedly in the service of Him

whom they have taken to be their All-comprehending Good and before whom they all bow as before their All-disposing Lord.

Heaven is described as *a place beautiful beyond all power of thought or description.* It is said to be a city "whose foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones, whose gates are pearl, whose streets are of pure gold, through which flows the river of life, on whose banks grow the tree of life; and in the midst of this city is the throne of God, and the glory of God is the light of it." This wonderful combination of the most beautiful objects of which we have any knowledge is presented to our minds to give us a glimpse of the beauty and grandeur and glory of the home which God is preparing for all them that look to Him for salvation. The spirit of this language is caught and expressed in that beautiful Scottish hymn, "The Palace of the King." The author names over the most beautiful things of earth, its mountains and hills, rivers and lakes, its fields and plains, its flowers and trees, and then declares that all of these, for beauty, do not touch the Palace of the King; then running over other beautiful things in nature, the sun and moon and stars, says "If these be so beautiful what must be the beauty of the Palace of the King?" No mind can conceive and no language describe the "things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Heaven is a place *of supreme happiness.* All causes of sorrow are absent. Sickness is a con-

stant source of sorrow and care in our earthly homes, but "the inhabitant of that land shall no more say, 'I am sick.'" Death is the king of terrors and he knocks at every door and brings sorrow into every earthly abode, but there "there shall be no more death, for they shall die no more, but shall be as the angels of God."

The greatest source of sorrow is sin. It is the source of every sorrow and sigh, every sickness and every death in every time and every land. But in heaven there shall be no sin. The inhabitants of that land shall be renewed in the likeness of their Lord and Redeemer who is "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." There too they shall be forever exempt from the fear and the reality of eternal death, for Christ hath pledged to all who put their trust in Him eternal life with all of its blessings and rewards. This will insure not only the absence of all sources of sorrow but also all things which are necessary to the highest and purest forms of joy. Holiness of character will constitute one of the chief elements of the happiness of heaven. To bear the image of God and to be conscious of no thought, no feeling, no desire which is out of harmony with the holy character of God will be a source of never ending joy and delight.

The employments of heaven will be congenial and pleasant. We know not what these will be but we are warranted in believing that they will be worthy of the God who directs them, and suited

to the redeemed characters of those who are to engage in them. We are sure that for minds made in the image of God there will be spread out for study and contemplation the boundless fields of truth; that for hearts thrilled with love and gratitude there will be revealed infinite objects and causes of love and affection; and that for wills brought under willing obedience to the will of God there will be abundant opportunities of loving, loyal service. We are expressly told that there "His servants shall serve Him," and we are taught that they praise Him day and night. There will be there an abundant supply of everything which can satisfy and please the tastes of those who have hungered and thirsted after righteousness, for they shall be filled. "And they shall hunger no more neither thirst any more, for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

There we shall meet and know the friends and kindred who have gone before and with them review the wonders of God's works of creation — providence and redemption.

There we shall see the beauty and glory of God, and love and serve Him with all of our hearts. There we shall be under the hallowed influence of the Holy Spirit by whom we shall have been made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and there we shall see Him face to face, who loved us and gave Himself for us that He might redeem us

from all iniquity and present us faultless before His Father with exceeding great joy.

To crown all, heaven will be *the eternal home* of all of the redeemed. However beautiful and happy might be a home, it would not be suited to the full and final happiness of immortal souls unless it were permanent and abiding. There are many beautiful homes on earth and much of happiness in them, but they soon pass away or else those who dwell in them pass from them. Even a holy home would not be sufficient. Our first parents had not only a beautiful home but a perfectly happy home, but it was not safe against the attacks of Satan, the enemy of God and man. He entered that home and by cunning and deceit led them to listen to his false promises, turn their backs on God and walk away leading down to suffering, sorrow, pain and death. But the home which God hath prepared for His redeemed children is to be safe against every enemy of God and man. It is written, "They which enter into this city shall go no more out forever." They shall reign with Him "forever and ever." There they are to enjoy "life eternal." As long as God lives they shall live. As long as His throne stands they shall be protected by His power and crowned and blessed with His love and mercy.

In answer to the question which springs up in every mind as he bids adieu to his friends and kindred when they die, or as he anticipates his own departure, when do believers go to heaven? the

Bible is clear and explicit. The Savior said to the penitent thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Paradise means a pleasure garden. It is used to describe the place of happiness in the garden of Eden and it is used to set forth the final abode of happiness into which man is to be introduced at death. It is one of the terms used to describe heaven. Paul says in the twelfth chapter of Second Corinthians, fourth verse, that he was caught up into paradise. In the same context, second verse, he says that he was caught up into "the third heaven." Among the Jews this was regarded as the highest heaven. They called the region of the clouds the first heaven. They called the sky, where the sun and moon and stars are, the second heaven and then they called the place where God has His throne the third or highest heaven. When, therefore, Paul, evidently referring to the same time and experience, says he was caught up into paradise or the third heaven, he thereby identifies the two names as standing for one and the same place. So the apostle John identifies the names of the future abode of the redeemed. In the second chapter of the book of Revelation he writes: "To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Then in the last chapter of the same book he speaks of the river of life proceeding from beneath the throne of God in heaven and of the tree of life growing on the side of the river of life

there. Evidently to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God is to eat of that tree of life which is upon the bank of the river of life which flows from beneath the throne of God in heaven.

To be assured by the Savior that upon the very day of his death the believer should be with Him in paradise was to be assured that he should be with Him in heaven. So likewise Paul teaches when he says, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." To change the home of the soul from the mortal body to take up an abode with Christ is to go to the very heaven which hath received Him till the restitution of all things. (Acts 2:21.) Hence it is written, "I heard a voice from Heaven saying, Write: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth"— from the very moment of their death they are pronounced "blessed," happy, and hence the assurance of the apostle, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (II. Corinthians 5:1.) The very moment, therefore, the believer leaves the body his soul goes to God who gave it — goes to the abode of bliss in the highest — the holy, the happy, the eternal home in heaven.

What a comfort should this truth be to us concerning our friends and kindred who have fallen asleep in Jesus. We should not think of them as wandering alone in the shades of the eternal world,

nor as suffering penal punishment in purgatorial fire, nor as detained in some intermediate state short of heaven, but as being conducted at once into the mansions of rest in our Father's house in heaven.

What a comfort in view of our own departure in the hour when our souls shall be called to leave the home in the body to go to the home where dwelleth our Lord and all of His redeemed people. How earnestly should all seek a title to this heavenly inheritance. How diligently should all make preparation for going to the celestial home. And how earnestly should all seek to lead their friends and kindred to walk in the straight and narrow way that leadeth unto life eternal.

CHAPTER XXX

HELL

The warnings of Christ are not to be interpreted as the threats of a stern and cruel tyrant, but as the counsels of a wise and tender Savior. The faithful father warns his son against a course of vice and intemperance that he may be saved from their terrible consequences. The tender mother warns her child to keep out of the fire that it may avoid the burning. So Christ warns men against sin and hell that they may escape the evils they involve. The man of the life-saving service who gives a timely warning to the vessel about to make shipwreck on rock or reef is regarded as a friend and benefactor; so should Christ be regarded who hath so faithfully and so plainly forewarned us against the danger and punishment of sin. It was the same Savior who wept over Jerusalem who foretold the terrible doom that awaited that city. It was the Savior who suffered and died that lost sinners might be saved who gave the most solemn and positive warnings as to the final and awful penalty that is to fall upon those who refuse the offers of love and mercy.

It is a false charity that would conceal from men the fatal result of a course of sin and unbelief. No option is left to the messenger of God concerning the delivery of the message. He is to hear the message at God's mouth and warn the wicked from Him. To disobey is to incur the displeasure of God and to prove recreant to the highest interests of man. You will understand, then, that it is under a sense of duty to God and man that there is here presented the scriptural teaching concerning the final loss and punishment of all of those who continue in a course of sin and rejection of God's plan of redemption till the day of salvation is past and gone forever. For all such the Savior teaches that there is a place of terrible punishment.

The Savior represents Himself as saying to the wicked, at the day of judgment, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels," and as a result of their sin and condemnation they are to "go away into everlasting punishment." Just as there is a place of happiness and reward into which the redeemed are to be welcomed, so there is a place of suffering and punishment into which those who refuse to be saved are to go because of their course of sin and disobedience. That place is called, in plain English, Hell. In the original the specific word used by the Savior is Gehenna. This word signified formerly the valley of Hinnon which was just outside the wall to the south of Jerusalem.

It was here that the worship of Moloch was established. It was here that the idolatrous people burned their infants in sacrifice to the fire god Moloch. Later this place became the dumping place for the filth and rubbish of the city. Here also were burnt the bodies of dead animals and of malefactors. To consume the accumulation of trash and rubbish and filth it was set on fire and kept burning constantly to prevent sickness and epidemics in the city. By a figure of speech the place came to designate the place of final and perpetual punishment with all of its pollution and suffering. It is said to be used twelve times in the New Testament to designate the place of final punishment. Josephus says (Book 18, § 3, Antiquities) that the teachers of his day — A. D. 37-100 — held that the wicked were consigned to a place of imprisonment to be punished with eternal vengeance. Christ addressed the common people and knew how they would understand His words, when He spoke of Gehenna, of fire, everlasting fire, everlasting punishment.

The pain from burning is said to be the most acute and intense known to the human frame, and hence by the use of this figure of speech Christ intended to convey the idea of the excruciating nature of the suffering of the lost. They are bidden to depart into " everlasting fire," and are said to go away into " everlasting punishment," so that these must be one and the same thing. So also in the ninth chapter of Mark the Savior gives

a sixfold warning against the terrible end of those who cling to their sins. "If thy right hand offend thee cut it off and cast it from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:43-48.)There is, then, a place of punishment for the wicked in the other world. It is said that, when Judas had committed suicide, "he went to his own place," (Acts 1:25) and it is written, "The wicked shall be turned into hell and all of the nations that forget God." (Psalm 9:17.) There the fallen angels are said to be "reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day." There are to be gathered all who persistently and finally reject the offer of salvation, continue in sin and thus ally themselves with Satan against the Lord God of heaven and earth. There is a prison house of suffering for the lost just as surely as there is a home of happiness for the saved.

In that abode of darkness and sin there is, on the part of the lost, the most intense conscious activity and suffering. All who go there must carry with them just those attributes, traits and characteristics which marked them here. They have rejected the only agency by which their hearts could be changed and hence, as they had lived in sin, even so must they die in their sins and pass into eternity with their sinful characters. Mind and memory, heart and will and conscience will

all be fearfully alive to the past and the present. In the light of eternity the mind will probably be able to see more clearly, the memory recall more readily and the conscience accuse more severely than ever before. Things long forgotten will be brought to mind. Things which had been lightly regarded will now be seen to have a very important part in deciding destiny, and sins that had been disregarded will now cry aloud for their just punishment. The passage from one home to another does not change the character of the soul. The sphere of the soul's activity is changed but not the soul. The rich man was bade to remember that in this life he had had his good things and Lazarus evil things, but that now Lazarus was comforted while he was tormented, showing that the power of memory still remained. Then it is written concerning the moral condition of those who come to the end of this world's probation, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy let him be holy still." (Revelations 22: 11.) The moral character becomes fixed at death, but still it is fearfully active. "They have no rest day nor night who worship the beast."

Hell is to be the most sinful place in all of the universe. We call this a sinful world, and so it is but there is good here as well as evil. The good and the bad are mixed. The wheat and the tares grow together here. This is the great bat-

tle ground between the good and the evil. God has a people who, while they are in the world, are not of the world. These He is calling and training for glory. This world, then, has much of good in it. It is far from being as bad as it could be. But hell is the seat of the power of sin and Satan. There he and his demons have been growing in wickedness for thousands of years. There have been gathering the wicked of all ages and all lands. There they wax worse and worse, for there all of the restraints of church and society, of grace and religion are removed. There all influences for evil are in full sway. If the way to the home of the lost be broad and easy the way downward in that dark abode must be one that can be traveled at a fearful rate of speed. There all ranks and grades and degrees of wickedness combine to sink each other to lower and yet lower depths of sin and iniquity. There is reached the outer darkness of degradation as well as of woe.

While heaven is a place of perfect harmony, hell is a place of terrible discord. Its inhabitants will be at enmity with God, for it is because of such enmity that they are there, and they hate and curse Him for the punishment and disgrace that hath fallen upon them. They will be at enmity with Satan, for they will discover then, if not before, that it was by his cunning and malice that they were led in the way that ended in death and despair. They will be at enmity to each other,— hateful, and hating each other. With

such feelings of hate against God and Satan and each other, and with every temptation to feel and express that hatred, they will be plunged into confusion worse confounded.

While heaven is a place of exquisite beauty and glory, hell is a place of gloom and darkness and deformity. In it is the "outer darkness." In it the prisoners are reserved in "chains of darkness," and unto them is reserved "the mist of darkness." Its inhabitants are the "children of darkness," and its king is "the prince of darkness." Moral and physical deformity go hand in hand, in many instances, here and there they shall be wedded in eternal wedlock.

While heaven is a place replete with the highest and purest forms of happiness, hell is a place of awful suffering and misery. There will be there an absence of all good. Even the good things of this life must all be left behind. All moral and spiritual good will be gone. All of the blessings of salvation will be lost. No proclamation of pardon will be heard there, but the awful words will ring out, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still." There no provision of cleansing — there no gladness and joy — there no grace nor glory — there no honor nor happiness nor life eternal.

There will be the presence of sin and its evil fruits,— sin itself with all of its defiling influence, the guilt and obligation to be punished, the terrible conviction and remorse for sin, together

with the ever present and fearful apprehension of punishment for sin.

The society of the lost demons and men must add to the horror of the sufferings of those who are there. To be in wicked Sodom vexed the soul of Lot. To be in the abode of those worse than ever lived in Sodom must add to the torture of some who may go down from respectable homes, but homes where God was not honored nor His Son worshipped. To be in the presence of those led hither by their example and influence must increase the anguish of the guilty, even as the body of the victim brings terror to the murderer.

Then the infliction of whatever punishment may be due to sin as described under the expressions "the second death," "eternal fire," and "everlasting punishment." These expressions suggest that which casts the deepest pall of darkness and gloom over the awful doom of those who reject Christ and persist in their course of sin until the end comes to this day of mercy and salvation. Their punishment shall be eternal. Men raise no objection to eternal life and eternal happiness, but against eternal condemnation and everlasting punishment there has ever been the most persistent opposition. It would be pleasant to hope that all would at last repent and believe and be saved, but we find no such hope sustained by reason or taught in the Word of God. We see how, in this life, the longer men delay taking upon themselves the obligations of Christianity the less apt they are to do

so. We see how character becomes fixed and crystallized into the good or the bad, and that when so fixed in the wrong direction nothing but the almighty power of God can reverse and change it. We see how men become hardened and embittered against God when He permits the penalties of their own sins to fall upon them. We see, when men form bad habits and bad associations, how small the probability is that they will break off from these and go in the opposite direction. But here under the dispensation of grace and spiritual influences even this great change may and does sometimes occur.

But suppose a man rejects the gospel during the whole dispensation of the preached gospel in this world; suppose he allows his habits to become fixed in sin, that he associates by preference with the enemies of God, that he continues in sin during all of his life, that he rejects God's last offer of grace in this life, dies in his sins and goes into eternity unchanged; what hope is there that he will ever repent and believe? If he did not yield under such favorable influences when his conscience was yet unseared by sin, what hope can reason suggest that he will repent in another world? If with all of the sweet and potent influences of home and church and the gospel and the Spirit of God, he did not choose the good part, why should it be thought that he will do so without these good influences in the land of the Devil

and demons and the wicked of all classes and all lands?

But we are not left to the conclusions of human reason on a point so important. The whole drift of the Word of God is against the supposition that a man will accept in eternity the gospel which he rejected in time. There are several classes of passages which forbid the idea of repentance and salvation beyond the grave. For example, we find catalogues or lists of such as *shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven.* Paul gives us one list in the sixth chapter of first Corinthians, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." He gives a similar list in the fifth chapter of Galatians, nineteenth verse, concluding with the warning, "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." John, the disciple of love, says, "The fearful and unbelieving, and abominable and murderers, and whoremongers and sorcerers shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." If it be said that this refers only to those guilty of the most flagrant sins, then we must not overlook those passages which pronounce the penalty upon all who know

not God and obey not His gospel. "The Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and *obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (II Thessalonians 1:7-9.) All who refuse to accept Christ as their Savior shall be denied an entrance into heaven. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life but the wrath of God abideth on Him." All who seek too late or in the wrong way shall fail to enter into the abode of the righteous for Christ hath said, "Many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able."

It is true that if, in this life, men repent and turn to God in humble faith they shall be pardoned and saved, but no such hope is held out to them for the world to come. On the contrary, the estate of sin and suffering into which they enter at death is represented in God's Word as *having no end.* Of the wicked there it is said, "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night." (Revelations 14:11.) "And if thy hand offend thee" — that is, a sin as near and dear as a right hand —"cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to be cast into hell, into the fire *that never shall be quenched*"— where "he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Mark 9:43 and Matthew 3:12.)

The Savior not only declares negatively that this suffering and punishment shall not end, but

positively that it shall be eternal. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels," and "these shall go away into everlasting punishment." (Matthew 25:41, 46.) So Jude and so Peter and Paul and Daniel teach. The wicked are compared to wandering stars "to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever," (Jude v, 13) or as Peter expresses it, "To whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever" (II Peter 2:17), and Daniel writes, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting death." (Daniel 12:2.)

The word in these passages, translated everlasting or eternal, is composed of two Greek words meaning always (aei, and ōn) "always" and "being"— being always. It is true that this word is sometimes used to describe the lifetime of something which is not absolutely eternal, as, for example, "the eternal hills," but it is also employed to qualify the endless existence of God, the eternal duration of the reign of Christ and the continued happiness of the redeemed. It seems to be used to denote a period of existence that shall continue as long as the nature of the object described continues to exist. The hills shall continue to stand so long as the earth of which they are a part shall continue. God is eternal in the sense that He is without beginning of days or end of years. The redeemed shall

enjoy the bliss of heaven so long as their souls live and the wicked shall endure the sufferings of the lost so long as their souls exist. Precisely the same adjective is used to measure the length of the misery of the lost that is employed to tell the length of the happiness of the redeemed. The condemnation of the wicked is said to be "eternal," their fire is everlasting, their punishment is eternal, the smoke of their torment ascendeth up "forever," and of them it is said, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." (II Thessalonians 1 : 9.)

How could God more clearly and more plainly have warned men that the fruit and result of their sins persistently clung to would be eternal banishment from His holy presence, and eternal confinement and suffering in the prison house of the lost? The only escape from this conclusion would be either annihilation or restoration through some future probation and repentance. But man's nature agrees with the Word of God that the soul is immortal and in the entire Word of God there is not a promise held out of repentance and salvation of those who harden their hearts and reject the offers of God's mercy all of the period of this life. On the contrary, all of God's promises and offers of salvation are for this present time. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

This is an emphatic way of asserting that there will be found no way of escape. All hope of a future chance seems to be shut out by the words of Hebrews 10:26, 27: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." When a man passes into eternity his doom is fixed and irrevocable. Between heaven and Hell a great gulf is fixed so that they which would pass from the one to the other cannot. (Luke 16:26.) Then he that is unjust will be unjust still, and he which is filthy will be filthy still; he that is righteous will be righteous still, and he that is holy will be holy still. Probation will then have ended, character have been fixed and destiny determined for all eternity.

Three leading objections have been urged against hell. One is that too much has been made of physical punishment and literal fire. The answer to this is, that the leading churches and best interpreters of the Bible agree in holding that the chief punishment will consist in the remorse of conscience for sins committed and opportunities lost, and in whatever direct punishment God shall permit to fall upon men who have destroyed themselves by their sins. The body will suffer as the companion of the soul, just as it has shared the sorrows and joys of the soul in this life. Since the eternal fire is said to have been prepared for

the Devil and his angels which have no bodies, it is held to be most probable that fire is here used only as a figure of the most acute and intense pain and suffering.

It is objected that according to the popular view of hell the great majority of people will be lost. This grows out of ignorance or misrepresentation, for the best authorities hold that when you count the children dying in infancy, the redeemed of the past and present and of the future, and when a nation shall be born in a day, the number ultimately saved will be far greater than the number lost, that they will constitute "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." (Revelations 7:9.)

It has been objected that to punish men eternally would not be fair and equal. But besides the fact that the condemned are not the best judges of their own causes, none of us can measure the demerit and the far reaching influence upon the individual and upon others of a single sin. God, the Judge of all the earth, will surely do right. Then, too, it must be remembered that when a man sins he opens the way for other sins, and that thenceforth he will lead a sinful life and, unless renewed and saved while here, will continue to sin forever and ever and, therefore, deserve to suffer forever and ever, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

It is a mistake to suppose that God will punish

all men equally. He teaches exactly the opposite. "The servant who knew his Lord's will and did it not shall be beaten with many stripes." It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for Capernaum whose inhabitants heard and yet rejected the Son of God. God has expressly said that He "will render unto every man according to his deeds." He will shut out from heaven all who continue in sin and finally reject the only Savior from sin, but of those thus shut out there will be all kinds and degrees of sinners who have enjoyed all kinds and degrees of light and knowledge and opportunities. It will be the office of Christ, the Judge of the quick and the dead, to mete out with even-handed justice the punishment due to each and to all. And such will be the fairness with which this is done that every mouth will be stopped and speechless in view of the fact that not one of all of the lost can charge God with injustice. The curse which will rest upon them will be the curse of sin which they brought upon themselves and from which they refused to be delivered by the compassionate Savior who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

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